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MAR 29 1944

THE NEW

STATESMAN AND NATION

The Week-end Review

Vol. XXVII. No. 680. [Incorporating THE ATHENÆUM] SATURDAY, MARCH 4, 1944 [Registered at the G.P.O. as a newspaper] SIXPENCE

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END THE PARTY TRUCE

THE political truce, as we have hitherto known it, cannot continue much longer without modification. How to modify it with the least injury to national unity and the least risk of misunderstanding abroad is the problem that events have set for Mr. Churchill and the leaders of the Labour Party. Officially the Party has so far maintained reticence about the unusual council of war it held over last week-end. But to suppose that it finds the present situation much more endurable than the rest of us would be to do it injustice. On some action we believe that it has embarked. The truce is an intimate relationship into which the Labour Party entered with the Tory Party when war broke out. It soon became a personal relationship with Mr. Churchill. It cannot be denounced without consulting him in his dual capacity of Prime Minister and leader of the Conservative forces. But when the claims of courtesy and loyalty have been met, we shall be surprised if pressure from the constituencies does not lead to greater freedom of action at by-elections. Whether any formal arrangement is reached or not, it is increasingly clear that the electorate will insist on resuming their independence. It is better that this should be done by mutual consent and in an orderly way. If it is not done by friendly arrangement, it will none the less be done—raggedly and uncomfortably, in ways that cause the maximum of friction and ill-temper.

The obvious compromise towards which we have been drifting for many months is that while Labour and Liberal Ministers retain their places in the Government, the truce shall cease to tie the hands of local parties in by-elections. It follows that neither Front Bench should intervene, either with speeches or messages, in these contests. The Labour Party would then, we should hope, assume much greater freedom of action and speech in the House than it has allowed itself hitherto. It must be understood that while Mr. Churchill remains beyond a challenge our war leader, the Left (and the Right) must be free to oppose him, on occasion, both in domestic politics and in the shaping of the peace settlement. We do not argue that this will be an easy system to work, nor do we suppose that it could be maintained for very long. It puts to a severe test the adaptability and the genius for compromise which Englishmen commonly claim as their heritage. From Mr. Churchill it demands a good deal both of magnanimity and of self-restraint. But an unusual and difficult situation is preferable to the strain which the truce has become.

From that strain the Independents have delivered us, and it is well that the nation should realise what it owes partly to Common Wealth, but also to spirited personalities of the type of Alderman White and Mrs. Corbett Ashby. Her heavy poll at Bury St. Edmunds repeated, if not in a sensational way, the lesson of West Derbyshire and Kirkcaldy. Prolonged into its fifth year, the truce was threatening to destroy our tradition of representative government. A younger generation was growing up which knew by experience no more about its democratic rights than the subjects of a totalitarian State. Young men were turned into cynics as they watched the way in which seats were handed over on both sides by the wirepullers either to elderly party hacks or to rich men who in effect bought their way into a nominated House of Commons. It is when democratic institutions cease to work honestly that men turn in disgust to one form of Fascism or another.

It would have been fatal to the revival of our democracy if Mr. Churchill, a Leader of genius, who knows how to get the effects of a totalitarian system without shocking our ancestral traditions, had managed to lure the Labour Party into a coupon election. Little would then have been left of Parliamentary democracy save its venerable forms. From the threat of a coupon election the attitude adopted at the week-end by the Labour Party has now presumably delivered us; and, thanks chiefly to the brilliant electioneering of Common Wealth, it is likely that by-elections may soon give us a better index of the country's mind than we have had since war broke out.

After this experience we believe that a small but definite place for the Independents in our politics is assured. The Independents in Parliament are said to be forming a united front—a useful move, making for effective Parliamentary action. They bring into Parliament an outlook and an attitude to which the Labour Party, with its heavy-handed discipline, is not conditioned. They can, moreover, win seats certainly in rural areas, and possibly in suburbs, where it stands no chance. As the Parliamentary reflection of the urban workers the Labour Party will always be, by an overwhelming preponderance, the main body of popular forces in our democracy. But that it is ever likely, with its present composition and leadership, to win an absolute majority at a General Election, we doubt. It will be able to form a government only with the support of the Independents and of the progressive Liberals. The best hope we can entertain for the future is in the growth of a spirit of comradeship and friendly understanding among all sections of the Left. The fatal attitude is that which Mr. Greenwood adopted when he argued that there is room in British politics only for two parties. There are many progressives and there are even some Socialists who will not shelter under the "umbrella" of Transport House. The Labour Party's machine can, if it so chooses, impoverish our political life by making it needlessly hard for these groups to get representation. By so doing it will bring Socialism no nearer—if that is the goal it pursues—and may endow the Tory Party with an endless lease of power.

Finland's Opportunity

Russia's terms to Finland, now officially known, are a model of good sense and moderation. Stalin has no use for the adolescent romanticism of "unconditional surrender." He states his terms plainly and in public, and even leaves a margin for subsequent negotiation. Very wisely he does not insist on a change of government: he is doubtless shrewd enough to foresee that if the Finns seize this chance to make an easy peace, the more friendly half of them will be so reinforced that it will soon get rid of Messrs. Tanner, Ryti and Mannerheim. Some ultra-suspicious persons question the clause which permits Russia to send troops into the far North to deal with the German

army round Petsamo. Our reading of this proviso is that Russia will expect the Finns not to undertake an offensive against General Dietl's somewhat formidable force of over 100,000 men, but to cut it off from the Gulf of Bothnia by holding Uleaborg and the other Gulf ports against it. This, surely, is the least Stalin could demand. He might easily have asked for an occupation of the populous South : the North is isolated and very thinly peopled. An undertaking given publicly, in the hearing of all the United Nations, to withdraw Russian troops when the job is done will surely be observed. Stalin asks neither for any additional territory nor even for further strategical points. The Finns in recent years have shown less common sense than might have been expected from a dour and sober people. We hope they will accept this offer. The best hope they have of overcoming their admittedly difficult food situation is to assist the Russians in compelling Dietl to abandon Petsamo, which could then serve as port of entry for American supplies. If they throw this chance away their future looks black. The recent appearance of a powerful Russian strategic bombing force is ominous for Finnish cities.

The President's Veto

The quarrel between Mr. Roosevelt and Congress over the Tax Bill has assumed a form so violent that one asks whether either side or both is consciously electioneering. The issues involved were, however, of the first importance. In order to combat inflation it was necessary to skim off a much higher proportion of the swiftly rising national income. The Bill, however, reduced to one-fifth the total yield of the additional taxes which the President had asked for. How easy-going taxation is, may be measured by the fact that, while we are paying more than half the cost of the war out of income, the United States is paying for less than a third. But apart from this question of amount, the Bill was so framed in its details as to spare the rich while it often pressed too heavily on small incomes. This inspired Mr. Roosevelt to write the angry and contemptuous message in which he said that the Bill offered tax relief not to the needy but to the greedy. The result of this attack on the motives of Congress was the overwhelming vote by which both Houses swept aside the President's veto. The melodrama in which Senator Barkley played the leading part revealed the emotional tension which this affair has created. The leader of the Democratic Party in the Upper House, a close confidant of the President, resigned in anger, was promptly re-elected, and then led the opposition. That done, the two old friends then staged an effusive reconciliation. It is a safe guess that the President is preparing his appeal to the "forgotten man" in November, and will attack his opponents on the score of their services to property and the profiteers. He can make a formidable case against Congress. It rejected his proposal to limit the salaries of company directors to 25,000 dollars. It blocked his plan to revise war contracts downwards. It thwarted his efforts to stabilise food prices, but held wages firmly down. Finally it passed this wretched Tax Bill. All this might win an election in a period of depression. But will it be equally effective in a boom? Apart from this psychological factor, the masses will be weakened by the refusal of Congress to provide adequately for the soldiers' vote.

Italian Democracy

Mr. Churchill's support for Victor Emmanuel and Marshal Badoglio seems to have caused some natural uneasiness amongst Italian democrats. Up till his speech it appeared possible that informal discussions had taken place between the Allied authorities and the Liberation Committee about a change in the leadership of Italy—certainly after the fall of Rome and perhaps before that. Bari radio had announced that a deputation from the Committee has been received by General MacFarlane and that the atmosphere of the meeting had been "cordial." At the same time, the Committee withdrew an anti-monarchist appeal that it had circulated amongst the civil servants. But whatever may then have been in the air, the attitude of the democrats has stiffened after Mr. Churchill's caustic depreciation of their rôle. Their position is difficult; they do not wish to embarrass an army that is liberating their country, but they are determined to see that the liberation is not merely formal. They believe they could organise much more effective aid to the Allies than any other puppet government, however "legitimate" it may be. Meanwhile, the effect of our administration is designed to lessen their chances by assisting the reaction to dig itself in. Perhaps the worst instance of this is the subjecting of the schools to the Church. In Sicily under Amgot, for the first time since Italy became a kingdom, the common schools were handed over to the Church, with full authority to organise and control them. In Naples priority was given to the clerical secondary schools to reopen. The secular schools remained, at the date of our information, closed.

Trade Policy

The Federation of British Industries has issued its second thoughts on the question of post-war international trade. It believes strongly in "private enterprise," but it recognises that a large amount of control of foreign trade will have to remain for some time after the war, if an unseemly scramble for scarce supplies is to be avoided. It opposes a return to the gold standard, prefers the Keynes Plan to the White Plan, and accepts the necessity of maintaining exchange controls and special trading arrangements within the sterling area during the time of adjustment to new conditions. It declares, in general, for licensing systems and quotas as preferable to tariffs for regulating imports, discards the Most Favoured Nation Clause, and favours economic groups designed to foster closer trade relations between neighbouring countries. On agricultural policy, it warns against the adoption of policies which would seriously raise home costs of production or divert British purchasing of foodstuffs from overseas suppliers who depend on the British market; but it also urges a long-term programme directed to increased production of the food much needed to raise nutritional standards. In general, these are sensible proposals, though bulk purchase of imports is rejected on grounds of opposition to State trading, and there is a tendency to demand full protection for British industry without more than lip-service to the principle that public control must go with it. The F.B.I. accepts "full employment" as a policy objective, and in broad terms also declares for economic planning—and then adds hastily that only the general framework must be planned, and the utmost freedom left for private initiative.

Too Wet, or Too Dry?

Will the forthcoming White Paper on water supply go to the root of the problem, and tackle seriously the conservation of our water resources as well as the improvement of the distributive system? The question of water supply cannot be effectively dealt with except in connection with that of water disposal; for, as matters stand, we have one set of organisers concerned with getting hold of water and supplying it to the public, and another set concerned with getting rid of water and sending it away to the sea. The level of underground water supplies is sinking in many parts of the country, and especially under London, for the reason, not only that more is being used, but also that more, instead of being allowed to sink into the ground, is being successfully carried away by Drainage Boards, and indeed by anyone who finds the surface water a nuisance. If promises of piped water supplies in the rural areas are to be made good after the war, and if industry as well as the main body of the public is to be assured of adequate quantities for higher standards of production and living, a careful policy of conservation will be needed, and cannot be enforced too soon.

The Pace of Legislation

The pace at which the Education Bill is crawling through the House of Commons raises in the mind speculation about what is likely to happen when the Government at last gets down seriously to the tackling of reconstruction problems. For if other matters are to be debated in the same way, what hope is there that legislation can keep pace with the needs of the country? In relation to the post-war settlement of our national affairs, there is need for complex legislation in almost every field; but how can such legislation be thoroughly considered in a Parliament which has also to attend to the conduct of the war, to keep a watch on current administration, and to provide time for official declarations of national policy intended to be listened to all over the world? As if this were not enough, at the moment Members, alarmed at the growth of "delegated legislation," are demanding that Parliament shall assume the additional duty of passing judgment on all the numerous orders and regulations which Ministers issue under powers conferred on them by legislation. Clearly new instruments, less bureaucratic than Civil Service legislation, are needed; but what form are they to assume?

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PARLIAMENT: Balfour Declaration

Wednesday, noon.

Quite apart from electoral diversions, the Coalition can surely not survive many more such Government speeches as that of Harold Balfour on Tuesday—when, winding up the debate on Civil Aviation, he indulged in a savagely partisan outburst, full of Tory rancour and cheap scores, rejecting contemptuously—and officially—the Labour Party's plea for sane post-war co-operation and pooling of resources. This speech dismayed moderate Labour men, but delighted (while irritating) the dissidents of the Left; some of the "progressive" Tories cheered it as warmly as they do any manifestation of reaction.

The debate had been initiated by Frank Bowles with a substantial survey of pre-war disorganisation and post-war possibilities; Bowles, a mundane solicitor, much less fiery than his close friend Aneurin Bevan, is growing in stature. Moelwyn Hughes seconded his vision of a world air authority owning and operating all civil aircraft and aerodromes. Sir Thomas Moore, speaking perhaps as one who had modified his political enthusiasms hurriedly on the outbreak of war, said, "We must not take the risks that we took long ago": Bowles and Hughes "were living in a world of fantasy." So said several other Tories, too—misrepresenting, of course, Bowles's actual proposals (see Hansard). Hogg said that the Labour policy was "silly, cowardly, defeatist, ignorant . . . a policy of Bedlam . . . bogus." It was a rude and entertaining speech; Bevan remarked that it was "always a delight" to listen to Hogg, but that it would be easier to do so "if he did not lose his breath and his temper at the same time." Boothby, sitting not so much on the fence as on the stone that rolls inexorably down to the Leftward slope, is a Sisyphus only in regard to his own constituency: "The proper air terminal" for eastern Scotland, he insisted among friendly but ironical cheers, would be Aberdeen.

Earlier, Members' digestive juices had flowed tranquilly throughout Sir Archibald Sinclair's sombre and histrionic set-piece on the glories of the R.A.F. Wing-Commander Robinson (husband to a Woolworth heiress, and usually quite silent) defended bombing policy. Major Markham blamed our weather on the Secretary for State for Air: "He is responsible, directly and personally, for worsening it." This was because meteorology, which "should regard itself as being charged with the great and almost

sacred task of keeping the air of this country pure," is insufficiently encouraged. Mr. Deputy-Speaker ruled the weather out of order.

On Friday—in, for a Friday, unusually full Committee—the Education debate was brisked up by the first bout between Butler and the Roman Catholics. The R.C.s led with their left (if that is an appropriate metaphor for Tinker), and followed rapidly with a right hook (Sir P. Hannon). The debate was almost too cautiously polite till old Alec Walkden, speaking for the Labour Party (a position contested later by Labour R.C.s), insisted that, although he had sent his daughters to an R.C. school (because an L.C.C. school wouldn't allow them time off for Margaret Morris dancing), this country was "overwhelmingly Protestant." This was a "vicious attack," bellowed Commander Bower, who proceeded to elaborate the hypothetical figures which Walkden had queried. Butler spoke with his usual competence and aplomb; and, when Stokes threatened a division, retorted, with as much heat as so cool a fish could display, "The hon. Member can do as he likes." There was no division: possibly it was only an exhibition match.

At question-time, the Chancellor announced the abolition of the armorial bearings duty. Sir H. Williams: "Is this intended as a consolation prize for Lord Hartington?" The Atlantic Charter was mentioned once or twice, amid derision. There was a long-drawn-out fuss about prospective overcrowding of holiday trains. Noel-Baker: "Staggering will help enormously if only people will carry it through." Noel-Baker also said (of the rule of the road) "The change from left to right would in this country be a difficult and costly process." From his prison-cell, Captain Ramsay has been flooding the Order-paper with one-track questions—unstarred, non-oral, anti-Semitic.

PONTIFEX MINOR

THE POSITION OF POLAND

[This is the second of a series of letters written by the Editor in reply to a correspondent on active service. The first, dealing with the treatment of Germany, appeared in our issue of Feb. 19th.]

DEAR JACK,

I am not surprised to hear that you are "fed up with the Poles." But it is no good being fed up with people; you've got to understand them. All you say about them is quite true; many of their officers and leaders are Fascist and anti-semitic. Their bravery is too often of the romantic type that loses the battle and dies in a blaze of glory. It would not surprise me to learn that the guerillas who have continued to fight against the Germans during these ghastly years of occupation have learned a more canny kind of fighting, and I suspect, too, that after the same bitter school many of them will come to see the advancing Red Army as a great ally against the Germans and not as a future enemy. Nothing was ever more tragic or lunatic than the Polish refusal to make an agreement with the Russians while they could. The Russians need their help when they cross the frontier; a Polish army might march with the Red Army and have an assured and honoured place among the victors after the war. As it is, only a few divisions and some guerillas who disobey their own Commander-in-Chief seem likely to share in the final defeat of Hitlerism. Sosnkowski repeats his refusal to accept the Curzon line and thus gives new justification to the Russian contention that the Polish Government in London were never sincerely willing to agree upon a demarcation line that was judged fair by a British Conservative Government, or cede land taken from Russia by the Poles twenty years ago when the U.S.S.R. was in the throes of revolution.

This puts Mr. Churchill in a spot. If the Poles would accept the Curzon line he was prepared to resist Soviet demands for a change of Polish government. As it is, he has lost his bargaining power and I suppose the Russians will enter Poland without any guarantee of Polish comradeship in the battle against the Nazis. The result presumably will be that Stalin will set up a government of his own choice in Warsaw. This is probably inevitable; the more reasonable Polish fear is that the Russians may repeat the policy of deportation so extensively adopted when Russia occupied eastern Poland in 1939.

Poles will make capital out of all this in America and to some extent here; but what they hope to gain by trying to divide the United Nations is not clear. If they were to succeed, the only consequence would be their own obliteration. Churchill, who understands all this very well, went to great lengths on their behalf; he told the House of Commons last week that he had agreed with Stalin (in spite of the Atlantic Charter and other objections) that the Poles should compensate themselves for the loss of East Poland by biting off huge chunks of purely German territory. I can see Stalin cynically chuckling about this proposal. The Poles might swallow Upper and Lower Silesia—and Pomerania and Germany up to the Oder, for all I know—but it would be a meal they could not digest and they would depend still more for their security on Red Army protection. The economic problems would be insoluble and the chances of any tolerable settlement for Europe as a whole would be even more remote than they look now.

The rulers of Poland behave as they do because they are attempting to perform an historic role for which they are fitted neither by their power nor their geographic position. The task of buffer State conferred on them by the Allies in 1919 satisfied their pride. But it was an impossible position and bound to end in tragedy.

Have you ever heard of Geo-politics? Probably only as the grandiose and dangerous theory of a German professor named General Haushofer, who was arrested by Hitler after the unexpected arrival in this country of his friend and pupil Rudolf Hess. It would be like that; it has often happened that the bright generalisations of Englishmen are taken over by Germans and defined and embroidered with a meticulous and thorough scholarship which ends up in absurdity. The idea behind the Munich school of Geo-politics is important, and one of the keys to the set of problems you discussed in your letter to me. It happens to be easy to get the hang of this theory now because the book which really put it on the map has just been published in the latest batch of Pelican books. It is *Democratic Ideals and Reality*, and the author is H. J. Mackinder, one of the few creative thinkers about geography. This book, which is now re-published, first appeared at the end of the last war, and it was written with an eye to the Versailles peace.

I cannot discuss all the ideas in Mackinder's book, which I have been turning over in my mind ever since I first read it about five years ago. Let me summarise a few of them. As a result of British sea-mastery during the nineteenth century which made our insular position impregnable, we British have never had to face the problem of power as it was presented, say, to the French or the Germans. Civilisation meant to us the culture of a long succession of cities and nations which have contrived to exist on the edge of the great land masses of the world just as long as they were able to defend their sea bases. Mackinder traces this story, the civilisations of the Nile and of the great Indian and Chinese rivers, of the Mediterranean Sea Powers, Greece, Rome, Carthage, Venice, and then Spain, Holland, France and Britain, and shows how their rise and fall depended on their capacity to maintain their sea-communications against infinitely stronger land invaders. Now the pressure of these land invaders has always come from the same place, from what Mackinder calls the "heart land," that is, the reservoir of population which presses down from the centre of the Eurasian land block. Mackinder pointed out that most of the world's population and a large proportion of its natural resources were in the Eurasian continent, and he argued that if ever any Power were able to dominate central Asia and Europe it would be quite impregnable from attack and in a position to dominate the world. He thought that in the last war we were extremely lucky to avoid being defeated by the Germans, and that, if we had been, this conception of world domination might have been fulfilled. If we were going to maintain democracy (which we talked about as an idea throughout the war) we also had to maintain the power-base of democracy; to preserve the idea of freedom we had to retain the realities of power. It was no longer sufficient to talk of the future of democracy, unless it was able to maintain its sea bases. He favoured the foundation of a League to prevent war, and he saw it as a means by which the democracies might maintain the dominant position they had achieved by their victory in 1918.

Haushofer, Hitler and others accepted this geographical basis of world conquest. They set up an institute for exploiting all its ramifications and decided that an alliance with Japan and a war against Russia were necessary for its fulfilment. The British of course were not excited by Mackinder's warnings, but they agreed with the French in making a peace more or less on the lines that he suggested. He feared that the Germans who, he explains, really read maps and understand these problems of power, would sooner or later conquer Russia. His remedy was to create a vast Poland between Germany and Russia. The Poland that was created was not as strong as he wanted it; but then it could not possibly have been. A Poland strong enough to act as a buffer against a reorganised Russia and the German idea of world power was (and is) a fantasy; it has no natural frontiers (not that they are very important now in days of aeroplanes); it lacks both the natural resources or man-power for such a task. Nothing could have been more cruel to the people of Poland than to inflate them with the idea that they could fulfil this impossible historical role. Just how helpless they were against Germany we learnt in 1939.

The strength of Polish nationalism is in inverse relation to the possibilities of its expression. But this national spirit is an honourable and durable force which has survived centuries of oppression. The Polish nation is an historical fact which we cannot conjure out of existence. Stalin, as his writings and words show, means it when he says that he desires a strong and friendly western neighbour. On that basis there is still a future for Poland. A democratic Polish regime would find good friends in the Czechs; both Benes and Marshal Stalin would welcome economic collaboration with a Poland that had learnt to found its independence on co-operation and not to seek it in a dangerous game of playing off the Great Powers against each other. That is the road to ruin, as the Poles should know by now. They must understand that their security must be part of a general scheme for Europe; that it will never be built upon futile pretensions to a sham greatness they can never possess. A false belief in national destiny has led more than one people to catastrophe.

One final word. Mackinder made the common mistake of men who understand a lot about the past and do not notice what is happening under their own noses. Civilisation to-day is not confined to the Oceanic fringe, and to attempt to range the Sea Powers against the Land Powers is the quickest way to world suicide. Civilisation has become universal in its content and the organisation of civilisation must also be a world organisation. Sooner or later, after this war or the next, after revolution and convulsions, that must happen. This takes me far afield; I will come back to the possibilities of post-war co-operation in my next letter

A LONDON DIARY

EVERYONE seems pleased with the new General Forces programme. Soldiers abroad won't feel so cut off when they can ask in their letters, "Did you hear that joke of Tommy Handley's the other night?" And, if the new programme is really intended to supply their needs, they will also have more material for discussing in their letters ideas about the world, present, past and future. This raises the central question. It is good that the Forces should have snappier and more frequent news-headlines, that women announcers should show that they really have golden voices, and that the music provided for the troops should be such a great improvement on the dreary background stuff that used to occupy so much of the Forces air-space. But no one who has had any contact with soldiers from the Mediterranean will doubt that they also want far more serious discussion and argument. The B.B.C. is disgracefully timid about ideas. Political "revues," even when intelligent and witty, like that introduced last week by Sagittarius (with much verse from this journal included), do not begin to fill the need. Mr. Hailey declares that he will take no notice of criticisms of this programme from anyone except serving soldiers. I hope that means that he won't listen to "pressure groups" who will be more keenly on the watch for dangerous ideas when they realise that they are being heard overseas. There may also be a tendency on the part of broadcasters to impose too much self-censorship when speaking to an overseas audience. I know the feeling myself; one is conscious of a greater responsibility in talking to a world audience. If this means that one must be more careful to use words that cannot be misunderstood, it is a good tendency. But the soldiers have a right to hear the most honest possible expression of home opinion.

* * *

I gather that the Labour Executive spent a realistic and interesting week-end discussing the future of the Party and the electoral issue. Herbert Morrison, I am told, was in great form and the obvious leader of the conference, as he should be of the Party. Attlee was almost alone in resolutely opposing any relaxation of the truce in the constituencies. West Derbyshire and other elections have had some effect on other members of the Executive, and it would not surprise me if conversations took place with Mr. Churchill about the possibility of permitting local fights, while maintaining the Coalition (which everyone is determined to do) until the end of the war. There was unanimity in refusing the idea of a "coupon" election, and long discussion, much of it favourable, about the idea of uniting the Left under a wider symbol than the purely Party umbrella which Mr. Greenwood was flourishing last week. The Communists are actually holding a "Unity" Conference on April 2nd, but there is no change in the Labour Executive's refusal to regard them as possible partners. Common Wealth—and perhaps even the Liberals, with Lady Violet Bonham-Carter as chairman—might in certain circumstances be accepted as allies. The electoral sub-committee of the Labour Executive is to meet the Labour Members of the Speaker's Conference, so that they shall speak with the Party's voice on the Alternative Vote and other electoral issues. P.R. has no supporters, but, I believe, there is solid backing for the Alternative Vote. The most disquieting thing about a conference which seems to have been generally very much on the right lines was the absence of Ernest Bevin, who sent a letter just saying that for various reasons he could not attend. He is said still to be disgruntled with the Party about Beveridge and other matters on which he has differed from his colleagues. It remains one of the chief problems of the Labour Movement that its three most influential figures—Bevin, Morrison and Citrine—so seldom contrive to see eye to eye about anything.

Last week I asked why Haw-Haw thought it worth while to tell lies to English people about raids on England. A correspondent from Yorkshire explains that he switches on to Germany to hear about the raids, well knowing that Haw-Haw will lie, but preferring his exaggerations to no information at all. The London press carried very little information, and though he took four Sunday papers he could learn almost nothing of the raids. He could not spend four hours in the train to see for himself. It is surely an unwise policy, calculated to create alarm and despondency, not to give many more details of the damage. Why play it down? Some civilians were killed. The raids have been annoying, did some scattered damage to houses and public buildings, but amounted, militarily speaking, to nothing at all. Though I live in the centre of London they did not even make me leave off writing or get out of bed.

* * *

Common Wealth has just published the first issue of a sixpenny monthly journal called *Common Wealth*. Because new papers may not, as a rule, be started during the war, Common Wealth had bought a journal called *Town and Country Planning* and ran it as the organ of the movement. The Ministry of Supply challenged this subtle move as an infringement of the Paper Control Regulations, but after legal argument decided very sensibly to allow the new political party a paper ration for a new journal. The first issue is, in effect, a lively pamphlet, devoted to examining recent by-elections and discussing the possibilities of a united Left. Its style, full of youthful exuberance, reflects the attractive enthusiasm of a Party too young to be cynical.

* * *

I do not expect anything to come from the suggestion that this country should adopt the "keep to the right" rule for road traffic. It would be too hard on the interests involved in the manufacture of cars with the right-hand drive, and perhaps even more on the immense number of buses, coaches, and trams built to set passengers down on the "near" side of the road. But the fact that we still call it the "near" side recalls that originally, when all horse traffic in England (except for people on horseback) was hand-led traffic, it was normal for a man who led a horse carrying a pack or pulling a primitive cart to take the halter in his right hand and walk between the horse and passing traffic in order to keep the animal under control. Thus, although it was expedient to keep a led horse to the right side of the road, his left side was (and still is) the side nearer to you, and therefore the "near" side, the right side of the horse being the "off." To this day, led horses are kept to the right in country roads, ancient usage having thus survived the statutory prohibition in the Highway Act, 1835. (The Highway Code issued in 1935 dodges this point. "When leading an animal," it says, "always place yourself between it and the traffic and keep the animal to the edge of the road." Which edge? Perhaps the author of the Code was left-handed.)

The advent of carriage traffic, and the need for a free hand (usually, of course, the right) to hold a whip, gradually introduced a custom of keeping to the left, while the old rule remained for led horses. In other countries the old rule was never changed, and when motor vehicles arrived they still kept to the right. There are exceptions: Hungary, I believe, still agrees with England (perhaps because it has always been the greatest coaching country in Europe); and though on Italy's country roads you keep to the right, as you drive into some Italian towns you meet the notice, *Tenere di Sinistra* (or you did *pre* Mussolini).

* * *

At Tottenham on Tuesday I heard the ghost of Gradgrind crying "Woe, woe!" In the Devonshire Hill elementary school the children's dining-room ("Yes, Gradgrind, the children have a dining-room") has been adorned with wall-paintings by two of the most distinguished artists in England. The subject of the pictures is not The Virtuous Apprentice or The Fruits of Thrift, but the unedifying story of Cinderella. And, worst of all, the most famous of economists came to unveil the picture and to give this extravagance his blessing! Lord Keynes as Chairman of C.E.M.A. damned the bad old times when artists worked only for private persons; praised the good older times when they painted the walls of churches and town-halls; and hoped that we were now returning to this more generous conception. He then told the story of Cinderella with a charming wit, and we admired the gaiety, the splendid colour and design of the paintings by Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant. C.E.M.A. and B.I.A.E. and a number of individuals, notably Dr. C. F. Strong and Lady Clark, made the scheme possible; the artists gave their work; and the result is a decoration fit to adorn a palace. It is fitting that the borough celebrated for its Hotspurs should display such enterprise and dash. Will the example be followed, or is Gradgrind still lurking in the shadows?

* * *

I have heard say Lloyd George attributes much of his capacity to work long hours and maintain his equanimity, particularly during the great strain of the last war, to his habit of always sleeping for an hour after lunch. I was interested to find that Mr. Churchill, who is Lloyd George's only competitor in energy among the politicians of our time, says exactly the same thing himself in *My Early Life*, a book which tells you more about Mr. Churchill, than you had ever hoped to know about anyone, and which keeps one constantly entertained and surprised.

> The rest and spell of sleep in the middle of the day refresh the human frame far more than a long night. We were not made by Nature to work, or even to play, from eight o'clock in the morning till midnight. We throw a strain upon our system which is unfair and improvident. For every purpose of business or pleasure, mental or physical, we ought to break our days and our marches in two. When I was at the Admiralty in the war I found I could add nearly two hours to my working effort by going to bed for an hour after luncheon.

But how organise this very proper arrangement—in a city of commutors?

CRITIC

THIS ENGLAND

A 5/- prize for the first entry in this column goes to F. White.

Paste entries on postcard or slip of paper and give details of origin. Address to THIS ENGLAND, 10 Great Turnstile, W.C.1.

"I found that by removing the glass the mask fitted me much better and was much more comfortable," said a Windsor woman reprimanded by a warden for taking out the eyepieces from her gas mask.—*Evening News.*

"I can remember Thoughtless Beauty winning the cup with a broken toe," said Harry Wright, who has trained many Waterloo Cup winners, "but to my knowledge a dog has never run like Dutton Swordfish with a part of his tail off."—*News Chronicle.*

Queue companion wanted, young lady in her twenties, with aggressive spirit needed urgently. Advt. in *Middlesex Chronicle.*

Pots, Chamber, plain.
Pots, Chamber, with Admiralty monogram in blue, for hospital use.
Pots, Chamber, fluted, with royal cypher in gold, for Flag Officers only.
Pots, Chamber, round, rubber, lunatic.
—From *Admiralty Stores List.*

NEW MODEL HOUSES

A DEAL has been said lately about the present and post-war housing shortage. If the new houses required are only to be obtained by normal buildings methods, then many newly weds and many returning from the forces, and others, will have to share a house for a number of years.

In order to overcome these difficulties, a small amount of work and a great deal of talk is taking place upon the question of mass production of houses after the war. From a survey of the work which has now been carried out in this country and America, and from articles in the various architectural journals, it is now possible to obtain a fairly clear idea of the aims, methods of building, and the results which are to be expected from these new methods.

The main aim is to provide houses without disturbing traditional house building, in which the maximum output will be needed for many years to come. The new methods, therefore, attempt or should attempt, to avoid using labour which will be required in traditional building. The same principles should also apply to materials, especially timber, which may be in short supply.

When war production ends there will probably be considerable areas of factory space, a large amount of semi-skilled engineering labour, including women, and a great deal of plant and equipment, together with supplies of metals (especially non-ferrous metals), all of which could be reorganised to make housing parts instead of planes, tanks and guns. It is suggested that this should be one of the main sources of supply of these new houses. Those who advocate this new approach to house construction claim many advantages over normal building methods. It is said that work which is carried out in factories is not subject to hold-ups on account of frost and rain as is the case with ordinary building in the open air. In the new building technique the frame, made either of metal, reinforced concrete or timber, is erected in the early stages of building, and the roof can then be fixed, thus enabling work to proceed on the site even during rain. In ordinary building the roof cannot usually be erected until the walls are up.

In most of these new houses the walls consist of a light outer skin to keep out the water. This outer skin is of either clay tiles, concrete slabs, metal, plywood, asbestos cement, plastic, or other material. The outer skin is fixed to a frame, or skeleton, to the inside of which is fixed an inner skin. The inner skin will probably contain the heat insulating material and will be finished in plaster, or wall paper, or rexine, or a veneer of wood or insulating board, or other preferred surface. Being dry built, the house can be occupied as soon as it is completed.

By using floor beams spanning from wall to wall, without intermediate supports, the upstairs and downstairs need not be tied together as they are in normal building, where brick walls run up from the ground floor into the bedroom floor. Thus more perfect plans can be obtained both upstairs and downstairs.

Those who wish to increase the size of rooms in our post-war houses can only do so at a proportionate increase in cost, so long as bricks and mortar are used. In the new form of building, little additional labour is involved in adding an extra three-foot bay to the end of a house. Bigger rooms should thus become a possibility without such high costs.

Heat losses through the new dry-built walls can be considerably less than those which escape through the ordinary brick walls of a house. This is especially important in a damp country like Britain, where brickwork often holds a good deal of moisture, and as a result causes houses to be very cold. With heat losses reduced by good insulation, it should be possible either to save fuel costs, or to obtain greater comfort out of the fuel used. In tests now being carried out in one house with good insulation in the walls, it can be shown that central heating can be provided, without increasing fuel costs above those which are common in the usual brick house with open fires.

As a result of work which has now been carried out in some of these experimental houses, it is almost certain that new methods of house plumbing will be used in the future. One of these new arrangements shows an internal plumbing duct, containing the hot and cold waterpipes, drainage pipes from w.c.'s and sinks and baths, a flue pipe from the living-room fire or kitchen range, and an extract fume pipe to take away fumes and steam from cooking or washing. These pipes are all grouped in the one duct, which is inside the house and not on an outside wall. In this way burst pipes from frost should be avoided. Any heat which is lost from the pipes will warm the house, and not the outside air. The intention is to make up the pipe duct, with its pipes, in factories and deliver the whole thing complete on to the building site. Those who have seen a plumber fixing a joint in some awkward corner under a sink will realise the time which can be saved by making the bends and junctions on a spacious factory bench.

In one house the gas meter and electricity meter and fuses are collected together and standardised in one unit, to be placed in a cupboard at the back door for easy inspection. In the same house the skirting is to be of plastic which is an insulating material and contains the electricity supply round each floor of the house. There is availability for fixing plugs at frequent intervals.

One Midland factory is at present working on a kitchen-bathroom-plumbing unit. The unit is about the size of a small car and is pressed out in metal, finished in coloured enamel. On one side of the pressing is the bath and wash-basin and w.c., and on the reverse side is the kitchen sink, cooker and refrigerator. At one end is the living-room fire and boiler and hot cylinder and tank together with the airing cupboard.

Some people will remember the years of the last war when several new forms of house building were developed. Some of these proved fairly satisfactory, but most failed either because of labour difficulties or structural shortcomings, such as poor insulation against heat and cold and sound. All these difficulties, however, should now be capable of solution. On the labour side the Labour Party has stressed the need for alternative methods of building, to augment normal building trades. It should be possible to overcome any structural shortcomings after this war. The conditions under which aircraft have been designed to operate, are more severe than those with which a dwelling-house will ever have to contend. The technical research carried out in the last twenty years by the Government Building Research Station is another important factor.

Will these new buildings impose standardisation upon an unwilling British public? The answer surely is that only by standardisation can the full benefits of mass production be obtained. If we want refrigeration and the most modern labour-saving kitchens for everyone, these can only be obtained by mass producing standardised fittings. If the design of the house and fittings is left in competent architectural hands, I think the result could be much more satisfactory than the mass of housing of the last twenty years, with its individual variety, but wholesale dull monotony. We should remember that some of our most beautiful housing—that carried out in Georgian times—depended in some instances for its beauty upon standardisation of form, colour and detail, as may be seen in some of the London squares and elsewhere. There is no fault in standardisation if the standard is a good one.

However satisfactory these several new types of house may be to live in, they cannot materialise in bulk without well-planned Government action. It is said to take two years from a Spitfire on the drawing board to a Spitfire flying in the air. Pilots must be trained to fly the Spitfire, and Clerks of Works would have to be trained to understand the erection of these new houses. This would call for a training school with the necessary field work and organisation.

When Sir Stafford Cripps spoke at Bristol recently he referred to the post-war merits of Government bulk ordering. In this way the benefits of mass production and security of employment could be maintained. Few individual cities could place an order for sink-units to keep a factory busy on one type for a year or two, but if the Government placed the order for all the sink-units required, the production could be well organised and the cost should be lower than otherwise.

If these new houses prove the claims of their designers, then we may look for great changes in building methods of the future. It is thought by some industrialists that it may become an exporting industry. Certainly the first need in Europe will be for housing parts, and not for cars.

DONALD GIBSON, M.A., A.R.I.B.A., A.M.P.T.I., Coventry

EXEGI MONUMENTUM.—*By Pushkin.*

I raised a monument not built with hands,
A nation's path will lead to it. There grows
No grass upon the way. More proud it stands
Than Alexandrian column ever rose.

Not all of me shall die, for in my song
There lives a soul outlasting mortal things;
My fame will walk upon the earth as long
As underneath the moon one poet sings.

Through Russia's length and breadth from age to age
In all her hundred tongues I shall be named
By Tartars, Finns, the Slav's proud lineage,
And Kalmuk riders of the Steppe untamed.

Long will my people love me, great and small,
Because in man for man I woke goodwill;
I called for mercy on the fallen soul,
And in this cruel age praised freedom still.

God's will obey, my Muse, and walk his ways;
Demand no laurel, from no insult fly;
Be heedless both of calumny and praise,
And to the cavilling fool make no reply.

Translated by FRANCES CORNFORD

SONGGRAM TO SOEKARNO

GREATER East Asia, in the Japanese definition, consists at present of six independent States—Japan, Manchukuo, Nanking-China, Thailand and the Philippine Republic. Representatives of these six political units made up the first Greater East Asia Conference which was held in Tokio on November 5th, 1943. Somewhat incongruously Subhas Chandra Bose's Free Indians were allowed to take part but, presumably for propaganda reasons only. For although they have a "government" which has even declared war on Britain, they have neither territory nor peoples to govern. On the other hand, Malaya, the Netherlands East Indies, and other Japanese-held territories with millions of inhabitants, remain without an even nominally independent administration. In the present phase of the Japanese scheme these territories form part of the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere, but they are not, or not yet, integral components of Greater East Asia. This distinction indicates the method by which Japan proceeds, in stages, to transform conquered Asia into a political system of co-ordinated satellite States. Naturally, the quislings of East Asia from Songgram, in Thailand, to Soekarno, in Java, play a most important part in its erection.

The term of quisling as we know it in Europe must be applied with caution and qualification to conditions in the Far East. Wangchin-wei of Nanking-China is certainly a quisling in the European sense. Songgram of Thailand, on the other hand, is a military dictator of the Franco or Antonescu category. Laurel of the Philippines, finally, is a straight Fascist who prefers Japanese to American domination, and says so. The pro-

Japanese group in Java sees itself in a similar situation. The fact is that the Japanese have overrun a large number of countries with widely differing political structures, and at different stages of their political development. They are proceeding in cautious stages, and although they give the impression of sharing out "independence" right and left, they are not doing it indiscriminately.

Of the six "independent" States of Greater East Asia, the stories of Manchukuo and Nanking-China are sufficiently familiar not to need recapitulation. They are artificially created emergency units carved out of the larger political entity of China, whose central authority continues to exist and against which they stand in opposition. Thailand and Burma again are in a different class. There was no opportunity for Japan to "liberate" Thailand except from the purely propagandist pretence of British domination. Thailand was a sovereign and independent State, and its dictator, Marshal Luang Pibul Songgram, co-operated with Tokio from the outset, thus booking his seat at the Tokio conference table well in advance. The treaty of alliance between the two Governments was not the price paid for the elevation of Thailand's status, as was the case elsewhere; it was the price paid for permission to retain this status. Had Thailand resisted it might find itself to-day at the bottom of the ladder, in the company of Malaya, instead of at the top. As it is, it was able to absorb the Shan States into the bargain and enlarge its territory at the expense of Burma, a procedure reminiscent of the Nazi-engineered Rumanian-Hungarian territorial quarrel.

If Burma to-day enjoys the same status as Thailand, it reached it from a different direction and had a longer road to travel. Again, the Japanese had little opportunity to be politically magnanimous since in practical matters of autonomy and self-administration they had little to offer which the country did not possess under British rule. What they could hold out as a reward for collaboration—restitution of full sovereignty abolished in 1885—was, in material respect, of academic value, but weighty from a psychological point of view. However, the Burmese had resisted, and sabotage, obstruction and underground co-operation with the Allies continue to this day. The Japanese took their time and waited for their new friends to prove their loyalty and reliability. Meanwhile they experimented, not very successfully, first with a native administration based on the "Burma Independence Army" and after its fiasco with a purely Japanese military administration. When this increased their unpopularity, they finally consented to put Ba Maung, the luckier successor to unlucky U Saw, where he had hoped to be from the start. Burma is a sovereign State since August 1, 1943, maintaining its national army at home and its own ambassador in Tokio, with Ba Maung combining the offices of Head of State, Prime Minister, and Commander-in-Chief of the Army.

In the case of Burma the restitution of full sovereignty was actually obtained at the price of a military alliance with Japan and a declaration of war against Britain and the U.S.A. They were announced simultaneously with the declaration of independence, the treaty stipulating that the two countries "shall accord each other all co-operation, military, political and economic, for the successful prosecution of the war in Greater East Asia." Three months later José Laurel reached the top of the quisling ladder in the Philippines and concluded an identical alliance with Tokio, providing that the "Philippines give all military facilities to Japan required for the prosecution of the Greater East Asia War." As in the case of Thailand and Burma, this means the creation of a large Japanese-officered native army which in the approaching operations may be thrown into battle wherever the Japanese Supreme Command sees fit, either in defence of the homeland or elsewhere in the Co-Prosperity Sphere, in each case freeing Japanese troops for operations nearer Tokio.

In the Philippines the Japanese scheme has come to light more clearly than elsewhere. Here, after the preliminary establishment of a Japanese military administration, a totalitarian movement called "Kalibapi" and cautiously encouraged by Shozo Murata, the capable Japanese representative in Manila, gradually came to the foreground. It centred round a number of uncompromisingly pro-Japanese and anti-American Filipinos, among them José Laurel, Jorge Vargas, Clarom Recto, Benigno Aquino, José Yulo and others. These men were eventually permitted by the Japanese to form a "Philippines Executive Committee" which had six departments, later to be transformed into ministries, with Vargas as Chairman and Laurel as Commissioner of the Interior, and which represented a kind of nuclear self-administration on probation, under the guidance of Murata. Following two visits by Tojo to the Philippines in June and July, 1943, these men were, on August 8, 1943, authorised to draft a future constitution. This preparatory committee comprised not only Laurel and Vargas, who had both taken part in the drafting of the Commonwealth Conventions of 1935, but also four members of the former Supreme Court, among them Chief Justice José Yulo. The Japanese had found experienced, American-trained men.

Concurrently, a "Philippines National Assembly," hand-picked by the Executive Committee, had come into being, and this nominated, on September 24, 1943, Laurel as President of the future Philippine Republic, and Aquino, the leader of the Fascist "Kalibapi" party, as President of the future totalitarian parliament. Shortly afterwards the commission went to Tokio, and on its return, on October 14, 1943, the "Independent Republic of the Philippines" was proclaimed. Shozo Murata, its real father, became Japanese Ambassador to Manila, Laurel assumed the Presidency, the Japanese military administration under General Wati was abolished and a military alliance ratified on October 18, 1943. Laurel declared on this occasion that "the political ideology of the Philippines will be no different from that of Japan. I shall stand for no political party while I hold the rudder of the ship of state."

Indonesia has not yet gone the whole way, but Java is well on the road to the Tokio conference table. Here the Japanese proceed in almost exactly the same way as in the Philippines, seeing that the situation is in many respects analogous. "Kalibapi's" counterpart in Java is "Poetera," the Indonesian People's Movement at the head of which are Ir Soekarno and Dr. Moh Hatta, two anti-Dutch politicians who escaped from the Dutch authorities early in the Pacific War. Others prominent in the movement are Deantoro, a native educationalist, and Hadji Mansur, the well-known leader of the Moslem community. The Japanese are making great play with the latter's name, but on independent evidence it seems at least doubtful whether Mansur has actually thrown in his lot with Tokio. In August, 1943, Harada, the Japanese Commander-in-Chief in Java, published a plan for the participation of Indonesians in the administration of Java, stating that he wished to carry it out as quickly as possible. Natives of "outstanding character and good judgment" would be chosen as members of a Council to assist the military administration, and local native councils would be set up in all provinces and important towns. The recruiting of Javanese natives into the Japanese Army had already begun in March, 1943, but since then Javanese collaborationists have been clamouring for permission to form an Indonesian Defence Corps by conscription rather than voluntary enlistment, and in Sumatra Governor Yano actually granted such a request on September 9, 1943. Harada followed his example in Java on October 4, 1943. This corps is, however, not conscripted but consists, for the time being, of native volunteers. Japanese officers serve in it, and it is under the direct command of the Japanese Commander-in-Chief. Woerjon Ingrat, a member of the Java Central Council, declared on this occasion that Java must help Japan to attain final victory "in appreciation of the confidence shown by the Japanese administration," adding, "We are morally indebted to Japan, and the debt must be paid." Meanwhile the transfer of "surplus labour" from Java to Malaya and Sumatra, where war industries are short of man-power, has begun.

It is clear that these developments, forced as their pace surely is by the Japanese and the native quislings, create serious political and military problems for the Allies. At the price of purely nominal and practically worthless "sovereignty" and "independence" the Japanese are buying a large supplementary army for the defence of the "Fortress Asia," which means, in the last resort, of Japan herself. This army is being recruited from peoples who are divided or uneasy in their loyalty, disorientated, suspicious, ill-fed, and often rebellious. They are being told by their new leaders that before being able to enjoy co-prosperity (of which independence is a token!) they must fight for its final achievement and go through the inevitable period of "co-endurance." Their saner elements know, of course, that in defending their native soil against the coming Allied offensive, they will merely help to hold the outer bastions of the "Fortress Asia," which will be sacrificed by the Japanese Supreme Command, one by one, as the enemy draws nearer the Japanese mainland. They realise that their "independence" is being bought at the price of solving Japan's otherwise insoluble man-power problem, and that the future will find them in an impossible situation.

PETER DE MENDELSSOHN

THE ODD STORY OF THE JA JA OF OPOBO

A PARLIAMENTARY cheer sounds quite different from the noise made by a football match or an election crowd and is somewhat akin to "Yah-yah-yah-yah-yaaah!" It was not surprising therefore that the first allusion to Ja Ja at question time in the House of Commons evoked the response of "Yah Yah" from several amused members.

This, however, was not repeated some months later when the Secretary of State for the Colonies announced, "The claims have been accepted by His Majesty's Government and Parliament will be asked to vote the sum of £11,420. The Nigerian Government is to discuss with the Chiefs the procedure for determining the proper payees." But no doubt on hearing of this there were appreciative cheers in Opobo, West Africa.

In 1892 a British Government award of £11,420 was made to the Chiefs of Opobo, their heirs and successors, ". . . at any time upon the production of the documents within 50 (fifty) years ensuing from the 1st of January, 1893, after an interim of 30 (thirty) years from the date hereof assigned for the occupancy and the development of the resources of the Interior Territories by the British Government." From this it was natural for the Opobo people to assume the amount was payable at "any time" from 1923. We are now in 1944! It is hardly surprising that the delay has given rise to some misgiving and considerable correspondence although settlement is now in sight of completion.

The beginning of the story goes back to the middle of the last century when Victorians secured vicarious thrills by reading about Darkest Africa and the White Man's Grave of West Africa. Ja Ja had been a slave but received manumission at Bonney and subsequently settled at the mouth of the Opobo, some distance away. There he traded successfully and, in the words of D. Macjaja, present Amanyanabo of Opobo, became "the Founder and first native Potentate of Opobo . . . established trading markets in the commercial interests of his people . . . and induced Europeans to establish within his territory. Unfortunately a misunderstanding developed between Ja Ja and the European merchants on the allegation by the merchants of trade monopoly by Ja Ja."

According to the *History of Nigeria* by Sir Alan Burns, K.C.M.G., now Governor of Nigeria, Ja Ja was invited by Consul Johnston on September 18th, 1887, to attend a conference "in a friendly spirit"; and he also wrote, "If you attend to-morrow I pledge you my word that you will be free to come and go." Ja Ja discovered this pledge was capable of disconcerting interpretation. In fact he could not go, and was then forcibly deported. Sir Alan Burns writes: "Had Ja Ja been times more guilty than he was, it would have been better that he should have gone free than that there should have been the least ground for suspicion that the plighted word of the Government's representative had been broken. . . ." So most of us would also think. Lord Salisbury, it would appear, was of the same opinion but owing to a curious misfortune of crossed telegrams Ja Ja was not released but deposited in Bermuda, where he earned the respect of the inhabitants as a man of unusual personality.

The Opobo people had been and were increasingly restive, and punitive measures were undertaken against them, including the blockade of the Opobo river in 1888 and 1889. Trade was dislocated and complaint is made of "the most iniquitous depredations of the blue-jackets." This led to the surrender of 24 guns, 442 rifles and 26 war canoes, a fine of 300 puncheons of palm oil and the deposit as tangible security of £1,000. With the exception of Chief Uranta (who evidently had behaved himself) "all the people, Chiefs and boys" were to "clear out" from the district and market for 3 months, and longer if they misbehaved. Considerately, if the 300 puncheons were not ready to hand security for this could be substituted. The Chiefs of Opobo obeyed and Deputy Commissioner W. Cairns Armstrong duly certified on June 17th, 1892, that they had won the confidence of Her Britannic Majesty's Government and that among those who had each surrendered one war-canoe and two guns were Chiefs Sam Annie Pepple, Cookey Gam, Fine Bone, Wogo Dappa, Saturday Ja Ja, John Tom Brown, How Strongface, Cockeye Brown, Warriso and Duke Norfolk. A promise that the rest of the protectorate should also be disarmed appears not to have been fulfilled but the Opobo people were assured they were under the protection of the British Government and finally the conditional award of the £11,420 was made.

Ja Ja, himself, was allowed to return home after some years, but died on the way. Eventually his body was buried in Opobo amid great ceremony. From all accounts Ja Ja was an extremely able and impressive character, and his name is still greatly honoured.

REGINALD SORENSEN

THE JUVENILE DRAMA

PARTING with any fine collection—books, prints, whatever has been one's quarry over a period of years—is a true bereavement, and one turns sadly for consolation to the literature of the subject.

Having recently delivered up a trunkful of Juvenile Drama sheets to the saleroom, I reached regretfully to the top shelf for Stevenson's *Memories and Portraits*, intending to re-read his essay, "A Penny Plain and Twopence Coloured," the best known literary link with the toy theatre: but after a moment's pause my hand came down again, hesitated at John Ashton's *Varia*, brushed across a bulging scrapbook and pulled out Mr. A. E. Wilson's handsome work, which borrows the evocative title of Stevenson's essay and is the only book which has so far appeared on the subject.

It is curious that more has not been written about it. The Victorian toy theatre (or Juvenile Drama, to give it its traditional name) flourished in such luxuriance just over a century ago that no fewer than fifty London publishers were kept busy, turning out sheets of scenery and characters to feed their fascinating trade. No sooner had a new spectacular melodrama proved itself at the Royal Coburg, Astley's, or the old Surrey, than the theatrical publishers set their hacks to work, sketching the characters in their most telling attitudes, making fanciful miniature versions of the scenery, boiling down the book of the play into a halfpenny pamphlet. Within a few weeks the current success would be issued in Juvenile Drama form—gesticulating characters and extravagant scenery in sheets about the size of a child's copybook, all ready to be coloured, cut out, mounted and produced at home in a miniature rococo theatre on the parlour table.

In this way, the cloak-and-sword melodrama of the early nineteenth century was unconsciously embalmed, being preserved in miniature in a child's toy long after its Gothic original had been forgotten. So, too, the early Victorian pantomime, even to its tricks and transformations and the stylised clown's business of Grimaldi and his followers, was accidentally suspended in this medium, leaving us a contemporary record of that strangely begotten, richly eccentric entertainment.

Between 1811 and 1850 hundreds of plays and millions of sheets were published, and in the Thirties and Forties the trade seems almost to have risen to a sweated industry. Whole families of colourists were employed, painting the sheets in watercolour and by hand. Since the finished articles were sold for twopence apiece the colourist can hardly have earned more than a halfpenny.

The coloured sheets to-day are as brilliant as when they were first painted, and there is a legend of a professional secret in the mixing of pigments. Mr. A. E. Wilson believes that sugar may have been used; I have also heard a theory that the dry colours were ground direct into a solution of gum. Certainly nothing that the modern paintbox affords can compare with the simple, clear, transparent brilliance of yellow, crimson and green—("a green," said Stevenson, "of such a savoury greenness that to-day my heart regrets it")—known to the professional colourist.

The quality of draughtsmanship varied widely. Sometimes it was crude and amateurish, usually it was full of a stagey spirit and charm, occasionally it was exquisite. Flaxman, the Cruikshank brothers and William Blake all worked sporadically for the trade; some of Blake's original drawings of characters, as well as his engraved sheets, are in the British Museum collection.

The origins of the Juvenile Drama are mysterious. Nobody knows for certain when, how or even why it came to life in this country. There is no known sheet earlier than 1811, yet in that year the trade was evidently in full swing, and several publishers were competing. Among cognoscenti there are two opposing schools of thought. Mr. Wilson (to whose book everyone in search of information on the subject must gratefully turn) thinks that it probably evolved from the German peep-show and cut-out toys of the late eighteenth century: cardboard theatres were certainly in existence in Germany at least twenty years before their appearance in England.

On the other hand, a respectable authority, the late E. P. Prior, who had given the leisure of a lifetime to studying the subject, was scornful of this theory. He believed that the miniature stages were first used by theatrical producers as an aid to design in scenery and production, and that it was owing to the enterprise of some artist or stationer that the thing developed into a domestic pastime and finally a toy.

I am on Mr. Wilson's side in the controversy in suspecting peep-show influence and German origin. The characters of the early plays have a strong Black Forest flavour about their costumes, and the scenic castles perched on frowning crags must surely have had their origin on the Rhine. (Later the English artists let their fancy rip, and by the Forties the scenery was a swooning mixture of village green, Oriental bazaar and the palm house at Kew.) But it also seems more than likely that in the beginning it was a family pastime, in which adults as well as older children took part; else why should the artists of the early period have taken such care to achieve good likenesses of the leading actors and actresses of the day? It would be the grown-ups, not the children, who went to the theatre; and as the picture press and postcard were still to come, the Juvenile Drama provided the late Georgian equivalent of pin-up art.

By 1840 the artists no longer bothered about likenesses, but by then, as we know, the toy theatre had passed entirely into the hands of the schoolboy. Dickens and Thackeray both loved it in adolescence, and Forster hints that it was the origin of Dickens's passion for parlour theatricals. He must, at least, have been wryly amused when the pirated Adelphi version of *Oliver Twist* eventually made its way to the "penny plain twopence coloured" stage.

When Gothic melodrama disappeared from the living stage, the Juvenile Drama, now profitably established as a children's toy, clung to the old traditions, and ceased to be a contemporary reflection. Supported by children's pocket-money, it enjoyed another twenty years of vigour, and then gradually, through a falling-off of interest, a cheapening of the product, and the formidable new rivalry of the penny "bloods," it fell into decay. By the Seventies the trade was as good as dead.

It is now a matter for antiquarians and collectors, and for their sakes a vestigial trade has survived into the present. The great names of the business—Green, West, Hodgson, Skelt and Webb—mean nothing to modern children, yet it was only a few weeks ago that the last of the theatrical stationers shut up shop, that extremely small dusty romantic shop "which was dark and smelt of Bibles," where the daughters of Benjamin Pollock, the last of his kind, did a dribble of business in Pollock's and Redington's sheets among the glue, buttons, chalks, knick-knacks and cheap stationery which were more generally in demand among the *terre-à-terre* inhabitants of Hoxton.

MARGARET LANE

PLAYS AND PICTURES

"Les Femmes Savantes," at the Comedy.

Opportunities for seeing French classical drama have been all too rare in London and we should be grateful to Paul Bonifas for his production of *Les Femmes Savantes* at the Comedy Theatre. Almost the last comedy Molière wrote, it has a theme similar to that of "Les Précieuses Ridicules," and attacks what would now probably be called pseudo-intellectualism. It satirises the type of intellectual camouflage which often hides lack of talent and understanding, understanding especially of life itself, which, as Molière seems to say, is the only thing about which it is really worth knowing. There are no boisterous farcical situations in *Les Femmes Savantes*, but rather the much deeper humour of the oddities of human personality. The speeches are long and in classical French alexandrines, the satire is against a set of affected pedants, preoccupied with what are, to us, long dead literary issues, and against the squabbles of the typical minor French poets of the same distant period as that in which Pope's *Dunciad* was written. Yet these people are not dated, and as the play proceeds one realises one has met most of Molière's learned women. There is, of course, less action than one is accustomed to see on the English stage, and the long speeches are a great test of skill for any actor, but they were very well spoken and with a pleasing economy of gesture. Gabrielle Latour was brilliant in the part of Bélise, a twittering neurotic woman who imagines that every man is in love with her. Paul Bonifas is always vigorous, and as Philaminte's long-suffering husband he was able to put the case for common sense and rude reality in one lovely line: "Je vis de bonne soupe et pas de beau language."

Ballet Rambert, at the Mercury Theatre

The Ballet Rambert should be more often seen in central London. Where are the eyes and the *flair* of theatre managers? In the tiny Mercury Theatre, in a corner of Notting Hill, have been born some of the best English choreographers, designers and dancers; here they go on being born, educated and "finished."

At present a remarkable ballet can be seen there: "Dark Elegies," by Antony Tudor. It translates the music of Gustav Mahler (piano and voices), the settings by Nadia Benois, and the dresses of undecorated plain-coloured stuffs—all in dark blue, brown and dark red, setting off the heads and bare limbs of the dancers, are well chosen for the two elegies: "Lament of the Bereaved" and "Resignation" where every aspect of sorrow is expressed in unbanal, essential movements.

Agony, desolation, the dumbness and numbness of despair, the torture and frenzy of pain, faintness, delicacy of suffering, resignation, courage, dignity. The interweaving of the music with the simplicity of the movements is beautiful, and the whole expresses much that is being felt to-day. Some may say "how gloomy!" but the heart wishes to avoid its emotions, it rather wishes to express them, and when inarticulate is glad and grateful if art can interpret for it. People need to be human, are proud to make sacrifices and to share experiences; that is why such a fine ballet at the moment would appeal to more numbers than can get to the Mercury Theatre. As a foil to this mood two other excellent little ballets were on the programme: "Czerniana" and "Carnival of Animals." The first is a very gay satire on ballet dancers; the scenery by Eve Swinstead-Smith, a new discovery, who shows what can be done at little cost with a sense of proportion and colour. The second is entirely planned by the humorous, elegant and poetic André Howard, and is a great pleasure to see. In all the ballets Miss Sally Gilmour's versatility and sensitiveness were outstanding. Mr. Robert Harrold is a daring dancer. Miss McClelland and Mr. Bayston—indeed, the whole group, and, above all, its inspirer, Marie Rambert, must be congratulated.

Boosey and Hawkes Concert, at the Wigmore Hall.

The last Boosey and Hawkes concert revealed a new work of outstanding quality. This was Aaron Copland's Piano Sonata, which was played for the first time in England by Franz Osborne. This is undoubtedly one of the most important American works of recent years, and in it Copland shows complete command of a style which he has been patiently developing for a long time. The thing that strikes one most in this music is its integrity. There is never anything false, nothing is ever done to impress, or to give the music an exterior importance that the ideas themselves do not warrant. The result is that the composer has been able to discard everything that is irrelevant to his purpose, and in doing so he has achieved a remarkable unity and force. The work is in three movements played without a break. The first movement is broadly speaking traditional in shape, while the second "Vivace," and the third "Andante Sostenuto," are in free form. The middle movement is perhaps the most successful, and certainly the most individual. Copland is a master of rhythmical development, and the way in which this movement grows naturally out of a delicate and restless little phrase of six notes is most characteristic. The last movement is a long slow meditation curiously static in character, if one may use that word in a non-pejorative sense. There is, however, a tendency here to that particular type of declamatory passage which no American composer seems able to resist. But even this does not disturb the logic of the argument. The piano writing relies perhaps too much on percussive effect, and this causes a rather monotonous similarity in climaxes. Mr. Osborne gave an intelligent and sensitive reading of the work.

The other novelty, or rather semi-novelty, was the revised version of Michael Tippett's First String Quartet. Mr. Tippett was well advised to make this revision; by doing away with the original first and second movements and substituting a single allegro, he has not only removed the less good parts, but has given the work a more satisfactory shape. The new first movement is a fine and vigorous piece, and gives further evidence of Tippett's power of construction. This is founded on his very personal use of counterpoint, with which one has now become familiar, and it was interesting to hear in the last movement of this Quartet an earlier use of a style which he has since developed and made his own.

"Richard III," at the Scala.

Mr. Wolfit's production is an exciting piece of devilry and homicide. Realising, perhaps, how confusing this play can be to anyone who is not a student of royal genealogy, he has played down the dynastic struggle and made his Richard a study of a cripple revenging himself upon the family which bore him into the world so woefully misshapen. This is a timeless villain—it seems only chance that it is Plantagenets he murders—and the Court intrigues appear to be only a reflection of the ambitions of this warped and powerful mind, the courtiers his catspaws in the scheme to lay the royal house in ruins. But surely Shakespeare intended the play to mean more than this; the arrival of Henry VII, for instance, should represent the triumph of righteous and peaceful government over the internecine wars that had brought England to the brink of ruin. In this production this seems an anti-climax to Richard's megalomania which collapses once he has destroyed his family. Henry becomes king by default; the only rival the scheming Richard failed to kill. Moreover, the element of fatalism in the tragedy seems to have been neglected after an excellent declamation of Queen Margaret's curse. Richard is a more impressive figure if he is driven on by a remorseless fate as well as his own hatred. Mr. Wolfit has endowed him with all the smooth cunning and evil energy the part offers. Though this production has some grave faults—chief of which is the contrast between Mr. Wolfit and his colleagues—it deserves a larger audience than the *Luftwaffe* encourages. It is a pity that the opening scenes were gabbled as if to finish the play before the Alert.

THE MOVIES

"Madame Curie," at the Empire.
"The Sullivans," at the Tivoli.

Having missed the press show and the gala opening, I saw *Madame Curie* as it should be seen, from the heart of the great public. The crowds were there all right; a bee of usherettes from a gangway competed relentlessly with the sound-track; lovers lolled their heads and mumbled; people went out in the middle, and others stumbled in, fingering my knees in the darkness. This is, of course, the foreground to every film, which the ivory-tower critic tends to forget. In the distance, very far away and warily persistent, is the film of one's choice. How good is it? Impossible to say. Why one film rather than another? The audience, like a sea, will vary to show the difference; *Madame Curie*, for example, went down well. Not so well, perhaps, as the *Miniver* with the same team, but well enough; Pierre Curie's shyness got a sympathetic laugh, and so did the conversation about Pr^2, ending "Mademoiselle, your conversation is scintillating"; we thrilled at the first glow of radium; when Pierre was killed by a runaway van, we all wept. Greer Garson, one of the few really attractive personalities of the screen, was setting out to look her most attractive, and the necessary second place was taken by a bearded Walter Pidgeon. From time to time Albert Bassermann, as her old teacher, added fresh touches to a masterly performance; and there were moments staggeringly miscast—as, for example, when a door opened for Lord Kelvin, and Mr. Aubrey Smith walked in. But, with and despite all this, how good a film is *Madame Curie*? The answer is that it succeeds in making an agreeable and moving drama out of one of the epics of science; the Curies' story has lured actors and director to go half-way to meet them, and if that isn't good enough—as by intelligent standards it isn't—this is still a film worth seeing and keeping tears for.

The "true story" told in *The Sullivans* has, one guesses, a tragedy of the war looming ahead of the episodes of family life in a small town. A railwayman (Thomas Mitchell) and his wife (Anne Baxter) have five boys whose adventures together begin with a bristling childhood and end with a common death in action in the Pacific. Despite some sentimental underlining *The Sullivans* has merit: the glimpses of childhood, of living at close quarters, of neighbours, the railway and provincial streets are authentic and touching.

WILLIAM WHITEBAIT

Correspondence

ANGLO-DUTCH UNION

SIR,—Dutchmen, enjoying British hospitality during this war, have made the discovery that they have not only many interests in common with the British, but also that they share a large number of characteristics. They wonder how, when the war is over, the link of friendship that now exists, can be preserved.

I was particularly struck by this tendency when I arrived in England in the course of last year, after having lived for three years under German occupation. In Holland itself, England is highly thought of, although it cannot be gainsaid that the long delay of the liberation has caused the fighters in the Underground Movement to wonder whether there is in England a sufficient sympathy with the occupied territories. Living in this country, however, one sees from day to day the sacrifices made by the British people in this war. This is why among Dutchmen in England there is even more sympathy for this country than among those who remained in Holland. There can be little doubt that if the relationship between the two nations is to receive a more final shape, the legal Netherlands Government in London will, once it is back in Holland, require sufficient authority to impress upon the Dutch population the conviction that the Allies have done for the Dutch people all that could be reasonably expected from them, and that the tempo of the liberation was not unnecessarily slowed down.

We may take it that the chances of such authority being held by the Royal Netherlands Government in London are considerable. For it is in Dutch parliamentary history the first government based upon practically all political parties in Holland. No Dutch Cabinet ever rested upon so broad a basis, nor has there ever been a Cabinet that was to such an extent a mirror of parliament, a Parliament which still enjoys the confidence of large groups of the illegal movements as is shown by their publications.

This does not mean that the present Cabinet is thinking of prolonging its existence by one day more than strictly necessary. It has already given official and unambiguous expression to its intentions.

Just as in England there can be no doubt that there will be elections as soon as possible after the war, this will also be the case in Holland at the earliest moment that appears technically possible. The war has a radicalising tendency, and it may therefore well be that in a future Dutch Government the Labour element will be more prominently represented than at present. As a member of the Dutch Labour Movement, I cannot call this prospect unwelcome, but this development need by no means imply that the Anglophile policy of the present Cabinet will be discontinued. This will depend on the degree to which the Dutch people will consider that in present circumstances the Cabinet has, in this regard, satisfactorily represented them. The voluminous underground press, with the exception of one solitary paper, demonstrates the fact that the Government in London until now has been invested with complete authority in the eyes of the Dutch. I myself escaped during the strikes of May, 1943, as the bearer of a message to the Government informing it that if it called for a general strike, this call would meet with unqualified response. The one exception, to which I referred, takes the view that the policy of Great Britain and America in this war is simply imperialistic, and as a result it is anti-British as well as anti-German. It is easy to understand therefore that when General Smuts uttered his plea for the collaboration of Britain with the small Western democracies, the Dutch Minister of Foreign Affairs, Van Kleffens, found it necessary to broadcast to the Dutch people a speech calculated to prevent misunderstandings as a result of the General's remarks. Indeed, the Germans were only too keen to make use of General Smuts' utterance in their propaganda.

There is yet another way in which the Dutch Government has taken care to facilitate future co-operation. It has created a Netherlands Military Authority. For, if the Allied Civil Affairs had to exercise authority at the time of an invasion, all avoidable and unavoidable mistakes would be put to the debit of the Allies, and the consequence might be

undesirable from the point of view of future co-operation. It stands to reason that the Netherlands Military Authority will find it easier to enter into the mentality of the population and also that, as a Dutch organ, it will be capable of bearing criticism more easily. Furthermore, this Netherlands Military Authority will be able to carry out its task as democratically as military necessity on the one side, and the wishes of the Allies on the other, will permit. For instance, the Government will not tolerate the deprivation of liberty at the instigation of the Netherlands Military Authority, without any appeal.

Even the Royal Netherlands Government, however, will be unable to lay a definite foundation for a future Anglo-Dutch co-operation unless the British people relinquishes the view that the infamous German cruelties are nothing but propaganda. The German problem will never be solved with humanitarian sentiments that fail to recognise hard facts. An ostrich policy is not genuine humanitarianism. People here will have to understand that the united continent for which German émigrés do propaganda in England will still be a continent with Germany in its centre; Germany, moreover, closely related economically to the Netherlands.

Let it not be thought that I have any intentions of criticising the British people because it cannot bring itself to realise the dreadful condition of Europe. We, too, have learnt to understand the Nazi spirit only after the occupation.

J. A. W. BURGER,
Netherlands Minister without Portfolio

[We are pleased to print this reasoned reply to Mr. Van Leer's article on Anglo-Dutch Union. We are only at a loss to understand the paragraph about the refusal of British people to regard German atrocities as anything but propaganda.—ED., *N.S.&N.*]

THE FUTURE OF AUSTRIA

SIR,—It seems to me that Mr. John Lehmann's proposed solution of the problem of Austria's economic existence is rather artificial and unnatural.

First of all, no nation would agree to be deprived of its heart and soul—its ancient capital city. Vienna is an *integral part* of Austria; its separation from the rest of the country would mean economic suicide for both. The argument of Vienna's "top-heaviness" is one which has been advanced by the most reactionary circles in Austria—not in the interests of economic prosperity, but as a blow against "red" Vienna. Vienna has for centuries attracted scholars, artists, travellers—as the capital of Austria. If it were decided to make it the seat of European and inter-Continental organisations, that could be done without making Vienna a "free city." Such a course has not been considered necessary in the case of, say, Paris, The Hague or Geneva.

In any case, it would not particularly "honour the German genius," since Vienna has always been the home of a long-standing culture with different traditions from the German.

I would like to suggest that Austria's future lies in the further development of her great natural resources—her iron ore, hydro-electric power, timber, magnesite, oil and other mineral deposits. It will be important for her to build up an efficient steel, machine tool and chemical industry; hitherto prevented by the influence in Austria of the German cartels. Improved economic conditions in Central and South Eastern Europe will certainly react favourably upon Austria. Her large reserves of skilled workers and qualified technicians and experts will enable full advantage to be taken of the opportunities that will arise. The increasing prosperity of Vienna and the industrial towns of Austria will provide a natural market for the country's agricultural products.

The execution of such a policy will, I submit, enable Austria to rebuild her national life in all its aspects, as an independent State co-operating with others for their mutual benefit; and it will enable Austria to make her contribution towards realising the allied aim of "freeing the world from want and fear."

M. BÖNSCH

ART AND BOMBING

SIR,—It is difficult to believe that the Allies have had so crazy a strategic intention as to "gnaw" through Italy from toe to top. That country has a backbone which splits an invading army in two and offers no flank for one of Montgomery's famous "left-hooks." The track to be frontally bitten out on either side of the spine is a booby-trap of easily defensible heights, ravines, river-crossings, or flats swept by artillery and sown with mines. If Rome, moreover, were flattened out and occupied, its possession would be a hollow triumph, and beyond it advance would lie through the thick-built greatest treasure-house of Europe, where destruction would mean infamy upon our name to the end of time.

That, surely, cannot be the programme. I conjecture rather that the intention is, pending invasion elsewhere, to attract, pin down, kill, maul and capture as many Germans as possible, relieving, in a measure, the Russian front, and mortgaging reinforcements intended for the Reich's defence against full-scale attack.

One fears, however, that the empty possession (and destruction) of Rome may not be excluded from our plans. The Pope, who is a stout and wily antagonist, may prove to be more than a match for Hitler, backed, as he is, by the many millions of German Catholics, a sore migraine for the Wehrmacht. The greater danger is that *we* may be seduced into bombing and gunning the precincts of the Vatican.

Nor is that all. Close around Rome are such rare conspiracies of nature and art as Tivoli and the Villa d'Este. Through such irrecoverable and fragile wonders runs the way to Rome.

The Athenaeum. D. S. MACCOLL

SIR,—I serve the crews of Bomber Command who have destroyed in thousands the lives of Germans whose war-guilt is no greater than ours. This is devilish work, but I support it, as all sensible people must, because it is the best means of ending the war and of avoiding a misery still greater and more prolonged. I do not believe that the suffering it inflicts on innocent people is any greater than that involved in other forms of modern warfare, so terrible must this be.

This view of our bombing policy does not obliterate my sympathy with those who are so sensitive to the horror that they cannot condone it. The anti-bombing pacifists adopt a consistent attitude in denying support to any war activity, and in being ready to submit to any tyranny or disaster rather than take part in violent action. It is their appreciation of the sanctity of human life which has led to their retreat from the realities of the situation.

What I cannot understand is that a similar retreat should be made by you who support the war, a retreat made not with the idea of saving lives, but in order to preserve buildings and ancient monuments. At a time of such vast sacrifice and calamity, this trifling with the progress of the war in order to attempt to save a building seems blasphemous in its disregard for values. A building erected by men cannot be more valuable than the lives of men. A symbol cannot be more valuable than its creator.

S. W. GREEN

[If the destruction of any particular city would certainly hasten the end of the war, then there would be no serious argument. But in fact the Italian campaign appears to be a side-show; to capture a flattened Rome would bring the war no nearer to an end. The argument that lives are more important than buildings is fruitless. Of course most lives are more important than most buildings. Equally clearly men willingly risked their lives to save St. Paul's. Great works of art, in which some buildings must be included, are valuable because of the effect they have on men's minds. We are fighting in order that we may be free to enjoy good states of mind. If life as such were the most valuable thing, we should not fight.—ED., *N.S. & N.*

GERMAN PRISONERS

SIR,—I am personally acquainted with Germans who spent the last war in English prison camps, and was told by them that they suffered much from the same system of allowing the prisoners to organise their own disciplinary system. No doubt it saved the authorities in personnel and time, but in practice it works out in the ascendancy of the toughest character among the prisoners. The standard of all is degraded by them, and those of better instincts and habits suffer accordingly. Borne for a prolonged period this can induce real sickness of mind. One thing goes without saying; the better the character of the prisoner, the worse will be his suffering.

If the Germans now imprisoned are so treated they will certainly judge our social system to be no better than their own, to say the least. They are already cynical, owing to the hardship of the inter-war period, and will be confirmed in their suspicion that all authority is callous and self-interested.

Anti-Nazi propaganda, combined with preferential treatment for converts, such as J. Richardson proposes, is only the reverse side of what they are already used to. Deeds speak louder than words. If the camps were run with care on more humane and imaginative lines allowing for the freedom from Nazi authority and the respect of individuals, a far more telling lesson would be given than by any method of regimentation. The same applies to civilian camps, where the need is even more urgent, owing to mixed nationality and the presence of rough characters among decent civilians.

25 Sunday's Well, Cork. MARY LUCE

NATURAL BEAUTY

SIR,—Finding myself referred to under this heading in two successive issues of your paper and abjured to "speak for myself" may I thus reply to Mr. Jack Wood, of Birmingham?

At Devil's Bridge, the most scenically important woodlands were in fact reprieved by the Ministry of Supply after the submission of a report by me as Chairman of the Council for the Preservation of Rural Wales and a subsequent inspection by its chief Home Grown Timber Production Officer, who showed a balanced appreciation of the undepartmental values that we exist to stress. Accepting, as we must, the over-riding necessity for securing both timber and charcoal, and conceding that the Ministry has in the past secured its ends without much regard to amenity, it is only just to admit that it is now seeking to do its appointed job with a minimum of offence and under authoritative advice.

Watchdogs such as Mr. Wood are still needed everywhere, though if to their angry barking they could add a little solid collar-work in helping me and the various amenity societies that I work with, we might then, as he says, become "less ineffectual," as we too often are through lack of adequate support.

As to his random yelp at Portmeirion and its toll-bar, seeing that I welcome ramblers over some 5,000 acres nearby that include two favourite mountain tops, I do not think that they should grudge this small peninsula (formerly a strictly private park and garden) being still kept relatively peaceful for the benefit of those who come there mainly to rest and to enjoy its rare seclusion. Actually the toll has been suspended for the duration, but when peace returns and with it cars and charabancs, those who elect to traverse its 20 miles of drives and walks will again be asked to contribute to their upkeep, and to the wages of those who tend the woods and gardens. Pending land nationalisation, when such outgoings will be met—unnoticeably—out of general taxation, the responsible owner must meantime recoup his inescapable costs from those who choose to enjoy the amenities that he affords them.

CLOUGH WILLIAMS-ELLIS

Plas Brondanw, Llanfrothen,
Merioneth.

MASSINGHAM v. PRITCHETT

SIR,—In his onslaught on Mr. Pritchett (who I know is quite capable of defending himself) Mr. Massingham makes the rash statement that "the freedom of the will has been the linchpin of Christian doctrine."

He ignores the hard, historical fact that St. Paul, as interpreted by St. Augustine and St. John Calvin, and also by the learned Anglican theologians who drew up Articles X and XVII, all disbelieved in free-will, as did the Dominican doctors who defended the Augustinian view at the Council of Trent, which left the question undecided.

Predestination is to theology what determinism is to science. Belief and disbelief in free-will have always alike existed in Christianity.

Pelham House, Bardwell, DAVID FREEMAN
Suffolk.

BOOKS IN GENERAL

HEADMASTERS seem to me peculiarly interesting because they are (or at least were) despots in miniature; and while evidently the caprices of a Hornby, an Arnold or a Farrar were unlike those of Caligula and Heliogabalus, they enjoyed within their petty kingdoms a power such as no mere statesman has held in England since the days of Cromwell. Unluckily they have never found their Suetonius, nor ever will. The material is lacking. The opponents of our premiers, and even of our prelates, have been hardly less articulate than their champions, but the Lives of the Schoolmasters are always panegyrics, so that it needs great care in reading between the lines to uncover the truth about these dominating characters. "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad." Probably the nagging of governors, parents, old boys, assistant masters and even of impudent journalists has sufficed to preserve most headmasters from the absolute corruption denounced by Lord Acton. But let us look at one specimen, certainly not a bad man, though impaired by his taste for autocracy. I choose Edward Thring, because his *Life*, by G. R. Parkin (*Macmillan*), includes long extracts from his diary that give us at least some illusion of intimacy.

Born in 1821, the son of a squarson from whom he inherited a valuable strain of fierceness, Thring was at Eton under Keate. He became captain of the school, but the squalor and "wild profligacy" of life in College were such as to determine his career as an educational reformer. King's; Holy Orders; a curacy; marriage with a German lady; and then at the age of thirty-three he accepted the unpromising post of headmaster of Uppingham School. This had been founded in Queen Elizabeth's reign, but there were only twenty-five boys and the salary was £150 a year. Twelve years later there were three hundred boys: Thring had made it one of the best known schools in England—and this though the trustees had opposed all his schemes for its aggrandisement. His method, which only the force of his personality made possible, was to offer to assistant masters, in lieu of pay, permission to build (at their own expense) boarding houses that would provide them with a handsome return on their capital. To-day it is widely felt that a schoolmaster's income should be quite independent of his skill, or parsimony, in catering. Schoolboys have cracked too many jokes, whenever a more than usually inadequate meal has coincided with a new hat on the housemaster's wife. But in Thring's day the system was generally accepted, and he could have built his school by no other method. As it was, he had to mortgage his personal fortune.

In this great enterprise Thring was inspired by missionary enthusiasm. His books make tiresome reading, for he was much more intuitive than logical, and he argued always in a series of analogies as exasperating and unpersuasive as those of Mr. Gerald Heard. But how revolutionary were many of his principles! The "great" schools, he declared, were not schools at all for the majority of their boys; his purpose was to make *every* boy a good and happy man. He would not get up from his chair merely to make a few better scholars. The first step in educational progress was to smash up the idolatry of knowledge. A good teacher ought to rejoice in a stupid boy as an interesting problem. (Consequently Thring was landed with a lot of stupid boys whose clever brothers went to less progressive establishments.) He deplored examinations, and inspectors—"Minds cannot be inspected." He insisted on a separate study for each boy, he emphasised the influence of noble and worthy surroundings. Schoolrooms were painted a Pompeian red, then embellished with autotypes and mural paintings by a Mr. Rossiter. This was thought bizarre, not to say demoralising. Edward Bowen, the Harrow master, denounced the mildest concession to material elegance, even an occasional hot bath, as "later Roman." And the example of Sparta was often held up to justify a Dotheboys régime. To-day all but very old schoolmasters probably would agree with Thring that it is hard to escape behaving like a pig if one is lodged in a sty. The house, he maintained, must be not a barrack but a home with a home feeling about it and home arrangements. It must therefore not contain more than thirty boys. Though he knew nothing of music, he had a firm belief in its civilising power, and a third of the school learnt to play some instrument. Every fresh subject, he said, was a net that caught someone and educated those generally left to rot. Boys were encouraged to have their own gardens; an aviary and a carpenter's shop were provided. Bullying, he insisted, was fostered by harshness in the masters and by forcing boys to herd together in promiscuous masses. No praepostor must be appointed who could not be trusted to act as a friend of the helpless.

Such opinions were revolutionary eighty years ago, and even to-day are more "advanced" than the practice of most public schools. One begins to visualise Uppingham as an early Dartington. But in fact it gained, under Thring, the reputation of being the toughest school in England, and the most obsessed with athletics. Thring did not believe, as Edward Bowen did, that games were the most valuable thing about English schools. Nor, as far as I can discover, did he share the ingenuous belief that athletic prowess was a deterrent to sensuality, a belief dear to many schoolmasters, although the experience of schoolboys suggests that the contrary is true. Thring noted in his diary his anxiety lest cricket should be too powerful and worshipped as the end of life by a majority of the boys. And the next day confirmed his alarm, for he learnt that six of the Eleven had made claret cup in a study, "one of the most utter acts of treason and mock manly meanness I have ever had to deal with." But boys left to themselves naturally tend to the idolatry of the athlete, and Thring unwittingly encouraged this by his denigration of the intellect. The best account of Uppingham during his reign, Hornung's novel *Fathers of Men*, reveals a school entirely dominated by the games fetish; and the evidence is the more damning because it comes from the innocent mouth of a most friendly witness.

Thring was profoundly religious, but like some other headmasters he found the Old Testament more relevant than the New. There was something primitive in his religion: he unquestioningly and genuinely took the impulses of his subconscious for the voice of God. His diary refers every incident to divine interposition—"I thank God with all my heart for another proof of His mercy and the power of good: A. came in to me to-night to confess to having played cards at Buckingham on Thursday." His enemies were God's enemies, and on occasion he assumed the awful aspect of Haggai or even of Habakkuk.

> Who that ever knew Edward Thring does not at times recall the vice-like grip of his jaws, the rigid stiffening of his lip, when he had made up his mind to sweep some obstruction from his path, or to crush insubordination; the fierce light which flashed from his eye as he denounced the school sins with which he had to deal . . .

He imitated also the undiscriminating animosities of Jehovah; he would penalise a whole class, a whole house, because one boy had got help with his lessons. "This is how I mean to treat these lies, not punishing the individual more than his social circle. They shall learn that lying does not pay if no higher motive stops them." ("Lying" meant pretending to have done the work unaided, but in effect the punishment encouraged lying: no boy was going to own up, when such honesty might entail castigation for his fellows and their choler for himself.) Thring's religious emotions confirmed his taste for autocracy. The trustees of the school sought to interfere, and parents presented another grave difficulty, ungrateful, foolish, ignorant, insolent and meddling. Once he flogged several boys who, on their parents' instructions, returned late from the holidays. When protests arrived, he wrote in his diary: "I may truly say in this matter 'God is on my side, I will not be afraid what man can do unto me.'"

Assistant masters who dared to have ideas of their own were firmly eliminated. In 1873 he notes:

> Truly this is a year of trial; truly God is sifting the work and us. But I will trust in Him. Even now I can see the good in spite of present pain. Witts has sent in his resignation, giving as a reason my disregard of the interests of the assistant masters! Astounding fact, when I have sacrificed my fortune doing my best for them. . . .

Two years later Uppingham was sifted by a more serious trial. Thring had often complained about the sanitation in the little town of Uppingham, and now typhoid appeared in the school. A boy called Mullins was despaired of; but Thring prayed and got up from his knees with a perfect feeling of answered prayer. Thus fortified, he turned on the parents, many of whom wished, strangely enough, to remove their sons from danger of death, some suggesting even that he should break the school up until the causes of the epidemic had been removed. Under no conceivable circumstances, he proclaimed, would he do such a thing. It was not right that a school should be a prey to the apothecary and his following. From the insolence of parents and physicians he took refuge, as usual, in the Psalms: "Give me not over for a prey unto their teeth." But the next day—"God has taken little Cecil Mullins. I misinterpreted somewhat His will, but not the gracious answer to my prayer in the spirit He gave me." A second boy died; and Thring still insisted that no boy would be permitted to go home on the bare receipt of a telegram: the parents must first satisfy him "on what grounds" they wished to rescue their children! But twelve days later he had to give way, and the school broke up. The whole place was indeed a sink: typhoid appeared again in the following term; somebody suggested migration; and Thring, just in time, moved the whole school to North Wales, where it remained for a year.

Thring's Old Testament religion encouraged, as we have seen, his self-confidence. To-day we see great matters like the war or plans to abolish want as moral issues, but in most of our daily decisions and opinions we cannot feel morally superior to those who differ from us. Thring, like many Victorians, regarded the whole of life as a battlefield between good and evil, with himself as a Commander-in-Chief. Thus the Liberal victory in 1880 was a victory for Mr. Gladstone's "Billingsgate," which made him feel personally degraded as an Englishman. He was morally shocked also by the "proved unwisdom" of tax-paid schooling. "The poor man," he thundered, "has no business to beget children. . . If the drunkard's children are brought up by the State, the State is paying for the drunkenness of the father, and is practically buying his beer for him." Indeed all taxation that aimed at the redistribution of income was sinful: "The State has no more right to take one man's property and give it to another than a pickpocket has." Social legislation was repeating the mistake of the pre-Reformation centuries "during which Christianity mistook Christ's commands to love and give, and translated them not unnaturally into being kind, without considering whether kindness was love." I do not give these quotations in mere mockery. Such opinions were widely held, the fruit of an ugly coition between Benthamism and Protestant idolatry of the Old Testament. We can understand nothing of history unless we realise that very odious views may be held by genuinely good men.

Despite all Thring's anxieties and his incessant complaints, he must be supposed to have enjoyed his life. He loved power; and he possessed power; and he was certain that he used power only for good. Sometimes he was discouraged: "How I should like to be released from this joyless government if it was His will. But I don't dare ask it. I see so many signs that it is His will that it should be borne." And again: "How

thankful I shall be when God permits me to draw my neck out of the slave's yoke they press on me." But this was self-deception. When Vaughan of Harrow declared that fifteen years was as much as a headmaster can do without rusting, Thring was indignant: "I marvel at the fifteen years dictum and the blindness out of which it came." He died in the middle of term in 1887, after a reign of thirty-three years.

Thring at one moment expressed the hope that no one would write the history of the school or of himself: "The whitewashers," he said, "do not want anything to be very good or very bad." Though his biographer was an enthusiast, Thring's fears of posterity were justified. Some of his thoughts and actions do not now appear very good; moreover, some of his intentions that were very good had very bad results. Students of the past are in duty bound to be whitewashers in Thring's odd sense of the word. For the more we study men, the more clearly we see in them how intervolved and complementary are their virtues and their defects. RAYMOND MORTIMER

SIDNEY KEYES

The Cruel Solstice. By SIDNEY KEYES. *Routledge.* 5s.

The Inward Animal. By TERENCE TILLER. *Hogarth Press.* 3s. 6d.

The Nine Bright Shiners. By ANNE RIDLER. *Faber.* 6s.

Poems Chiefly Cornish. By A. L. ROWSE. *Faber.* 6s.

Beauty and the Beast. By JOHN HEATH-STUBBS. *Routledge.* 5s.

One reads the poetry of one's contemporaries with a different eye. It is of course the old eye that has taken in perspectives of Shakespeare, Donne, Milton and Browning, but occupied now at closer quarters. At once—given the blessings of short sight—we are curious, sceptical, involved in the foreground we are busy examining. Impossible to stand back, to take a longer view, and even if one could, how much that fascinates would need to be sacrificed!

Among the books of verse I have been reading lately some, then, have attracted me for one reason, some for another. There is the varying climate, the interest of seeing how each writer responds to the war. Mr. Rowse is intelligent and inhibited, and walks in well-trimmed ways. Mrs. Ridler produces a baby, believes in God. Mr. Tiller, more self-consciously striving "after something," can be nebulous and cryptic and yet touch the imagination unexpectedly. I have read them with respect, and enjoyed reading them. Bits of them probably I shall remember when the titles of their books have grown dim: the bathers in *The Inward Animal*, for example, feeling "the cold stocking of the stream."

A scattered interest is suddenly brought to the point by *The Cruel Solstice*, which may leave one guessing at times, but guessing in a way that can be satisfied by a more careful re-reading. Let me quote one of the poems which first caught my attention, "Moonlight Night on the Port":

> Some were unlucky. Blown a mile to shoreward
> Their crossed hands lie among the bitter marsh-grass.
> Link arms and sing. The moon sails out
> Spreading distraction on the faces, drawing
> The useful hands to birdclaws . . .
> If a ring
> Flashes, what matter? Other hands are ringless.
> We'll never go home to-night, never to-night.
>
> And some shall be pulled down, revolving sickly
> On the tide's whim, their bare feet scraping sand.
> The moon is out, my lady; lady of different
> Voices and gestures, under the same cold eyes.
> The buoy swings ringing. Under the curved seawall
> My hands reveal your soundings all the same.
>
> Some were more gallant, dragged across the seabed
> In iron cages, coughing out their lungs.
> Singing in bars, running before the seven
> Set winds of the heart; bearing our weakness bravely
> Through all the frigid seasons, we have weighed
> The chances against us, and refuse no kisses—
> Even the tide's kiss on this dog-toothed shore.
>
> For some are lucky, leaving their curved faces
> Propped in the moonlight while their bodies drown.

Here, as elsewhere in the volume, the finality of tone and phrasing seems to me striking. That tone is, almost without exception, clear, passionate and bitter, ringing out in images like "the tide's kiss on this dog-toothed shore" or such a repetition as the following:

> I am the man started a long time since
> To drive into the famous land some call
> Posterity, some famine, some the valley
> Of bones, valley of bones, valley of dry
> Bones where a critical mind is always searching
> The poor dried marrow for a drop of truth.

It isn't hard to put down the prevailing mood to the writer's acceptance of sacrifice (the above lines are spoken in a dialogue between death and a ploughman), and with this mood, uncommon in poetry to-day, goes a remarkable lyrical assurance. The last poem in the book is a preparation for death in the desert, a fate unhappily that came to the author in the last days of the Tunisian campaign; what he wrote with tragic relevance applies to his poetry from the beginning:

> You must be ready for the desert
> Even among the orchards starred with blossoms,
> Even in spring. . . .

So, in *The Cruel Solstice*, and in Keyes's previous volume, *The Iron Laurel* (Routledge, 2s. 6d.), the idea of death haunts, though it may be only in an aptly harsh image. The effect is by no means grey; bitter, perhaps, but coloured by flashes. The brightness of landscape in "Cervières" and "Spring" is one of the memorable qualities of *The Cruel Solstice;* or here is "Pheasant" from *The Iron Laurel:*

> Cock stubble-searching pheasant, delicate
> Stepper, Cathayan bird, you fire
> The landscape, as across the hollow lyre
> Quick fingers burn the moment: call your mate
> From the deep woods to-night, for your surprised
> Metallic summons answers me like wire
> Thrilling with messages, and I cannot wait
> To catch its evening import, half-surmised.
> Others may speak these things, but you alone
> Fear never noise, make the damp thickets ring
> With your assertions, set the afternoon
> Alight with coloured pride. Your image glows
> At autumn's centre—bright, unquestioning
> Exotic bird, haunter of autumn hedgerows.

The sonnet form, not strictly adhered to—note the short second line and the feminine ending—gives just enough shape, without rigidity, to the lines: we may remark an inconclusiveness, like the well-managed shrug of one who is sure of himself. So complete, though, is the impression made by the hundred or so poems in these two volumes that it is difficult to think of the writer, if he had lived, moving on towards further achievement. He was certainly master of his material: the first serious casualty, so far as poetry is concerned, of the war.

It is a step down to the others. Mr. Tiller has many qualities which make him interesting to read if difficult at times to enjoy; social change and decay, the human sex plumage, war, the sea, Egypt, excite him to a jangling brilliance.

> A rakish summer with cocked leaf and flower
> winks at the coloured walkers; the river
> lolls, a witch's tongue, behind the islands
> and the swaggering shores.

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He is best, I think, as a special reporter, coming back with stories of a *danse du ventre* in a Cairo restaurant, a sand-storm, a Coptic church, an interview with a sphinx; such scenes bring all his senses into focus. He is less vivid, but still urgent, when he sets out to convey feelings of isolation and sexual disturbance. At his most ambitious—in the "Birth of Christ" with which the book ends—one feels not so much that he is out of his depth as swimming in the wrong direction; though even here the failure has a certain excitement. Against this might be set the opening "Eclogue for a Dying House," a controlled and biting poem of social decay.

Mrs. Ridler's poems are the verse equivalent of a personal and nature journal such as Miss Margiad Evans's *Autobiography*. Verse, no doubt, is the more suitable form, and one enjoys *The Nine Bright Shiners* for its double thread of experience and imagination. None of the poems aims too high; the texture is homely but capable of taking religious and contemplative lights as well as the particularities of a quiet life. Landscape, change of weather, the baby, the kitchen garden, and the sort of reflections that don't usually get into verse:

> As we in this country still remember Wordsworth,
> At Alfoxton wonder how he could run the huge house,
> And why he should start so late in the afternoon
> On the walking-tour that began the Ancient Mariner. . . .

Poems Chiefly Cornish seems to me an advance on Mr. Rowse's previous volume, partly because he has stoppered down the anguish which used occasionally to break through the well-ordered surface of his writing. He isn't, I believe, inescapably a poet, but sensibility, intelligence and a nice sense of words—qualities unfortunately rare to-day—enable him to say in verse many things which otherwise he would not say at all. His feeling for Cornwall and Oxford is strong, and he pursues it with discrimination; the long opening poem, for example, is an unusually appealing product of local piety. Elsewhere, too, he shows that he has an eye for the English scene. Too many walks, with a hint of the solitude enshrined by Gray? Perhaps; but it is no more than a hint.

Mr. Heath-Stubbs is described by his publisher as a "traditionalist" among the younger poets. Sensibility—as with Mr. Rowse—is his strong point: sensibility to his favourite poets, to a pictorial effect or a musical equivalent. He can use the dramatic narrative effectively, as in the Browningesque "Leporello" and "The Lament of Tristan." What he writes is smooth, delicate and well-tuned, though of secondary importance.

G. W. STONIER

THE AMERICAN LABOUR MOVEMENT

The American Labour Split and Allied Unity. By BRYN ROBERTS. *Lawrence and Wishart.* 5s.

News of American labour politics is scarce and often distorted. From time to time the headlines that greet us at the breakfast table tell of some new crisis. "500,000 miners answer Lewis strike call!" "Army occupy U.S. aviation plant!" "Roosevelt takes over railways!" Rarely, once the immediate sensation is past, do we hear the rest of the story. Why are there two rival groups of unions in the United States? British Labour, which can learn so much from the great split, knows little of its cause. On the result of the elections to be held in the autumn of this year will depend the extent of American participation in the work of salvage and reconstruction in Europe: the decisive element in these elections may well be the position taken up by organised labour. That is why it is essential that we should understand the background to such events as the campaign for independent political action by Labour or the present disruptive activities of John Lewis. Because this is the purpose of Mr. Roberts's book it is probably of more significance for our Labour movement than any other published since the war.

Mr. Roberts has clearly sensed the necessity for such explanations. When, therefore, he went to America in the autumn of 1942, as fraternal delegate from the Trades Union Congress to the A.F. of L. Convention, he took the opportunity to collect the material upon which this book is based. The files of both the A.F. of L. and the Congress of Industrial Organisations were made available to him and he had many personal contacts with the leaders of both groups. The result is the most detailed and accurate account of the present developments in American trade unionism that has yet appeared in this country. It is obviously the work of a trade union official—Mr. Roberts is general secretary of the National Union of Public Employees—for there is no attempt to single out the dramatic highlights of the split and ignore the more prosaic yet equally vital day-to-day developments. All the essential details are here, from a general survey of the characteristics of labour organisation in the United States to pen pictures of its principal figures.

Nor can Mr. Roberts be accused of undue partisanship. He makes some caustic remarks about the attitude of the A.F. of L. towards the C.I.O. and towards the Russian trade unions. But on the whole the documents he has assembled and his quietly impressive analysis give a fair and reasonable presentation of the problem. The C.I.O. stands for industrial organisation; it considers that the old craft methods upon which the A.F. of L. is built are unsuitable to the age of mass production and huge economic trusts. To begin with, it was merely a collection of like-minded unions within the framework of the A.F. of L. But the two points of view proved irreconcilable, and in spite of many efforts to heal the breach a score of unions were expelled from the A.F. of L. Since then the C.I.O. has grown to a rival organisation, equalling its parent in size and out-distancing it in enthusiasm and policy. The C.I.O. has come to stay.

The leaders of the T.U.C. have so far proved reluctant to recognise this fact. They have been loyal, too loyal, to their old ties with the A.F. of L. and continue to regard it as the only legitimate trade union group in the United States. The C.I.O. naturally feels bitter that it is denied its legitimate status in the international field. At home, thanks to the enlightened policy of President Roosevelt, there is no discrimination. A.F. of L. and C.I.O. representatives sit side by side on all official boards. As long as the A.F. of L. refused to associate with the Russians, no Tripartite Committee could be formed; the situation now is even worse. The T.U.C.'s proposal for a world trade union conference this year may well be sabotaged by the ill-considered refusal of the A.F. of L. to attend if the Russians are to be present.

It is with the hope that something can be done to modify this distressing perspective that Mr. Roberts concludes his book. A rather larger part of it is devoted to this pressing issue of international trade union unity than merely academic considerations would dictate. But that is necessary and understandable. For the relations between the C.I.O. and the A.F. of L. are the keystone of the problem. Only the Americans themselves can find a solution, but we cannot feel indifferent about its nature. It is all the more essential that we should not continue to aggravate the position by clinging obstinately to old

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loyalties and obsolete conceptions of organisation. Of the importance of agreement and consequently of this contribution to it, let the President of the Amalgamated Engineering Union, Mr. Tanner, speak:

> If it came into being to-day, under the impact of the greatest crisis which has ever confronted the organised working class—this world-wide conflict which bends us to a common effort to preserve the basic liberties—we should have gone far towards laying solid foundations for a democratic rebuilding of our war shattered world.

No apologies are necessary for plain speaking in such circumstances. Mr. Roberts has done a service to his movement by writing this book.

NORMAN MACKENZIE

THE GREEK ANTHOLOGY

Poems from the Greek Anthology. Translated by FORREST REID. *Faber and Faber*. 5s.

The Greek elegiac must have enjoyed a longer life than is given to most forms of poetry. The earliest example, a fragmentary dedication from Perachora on the Corinthian Gulf is thought to date from the eighth century B.C., while six charming lines by Cometas were probably written about A.D. 950. Originally a song sung to a flute accompaniment, the elegiac became the means by which the Greeks expressed their feelings on many matters that engaged their interest or sensibility. It is the most intimate form of their poetry, the most personal and the most domestic. Fortunately the labours of ancient scholars from Meleager to Planudes collected elegiac poems of very different dates and by a large number of authors in the *Palatine Anthology*, so that we are well acquainted with it in the whole course of its history. From this great mass of material Mr. Reid has chosen pieces by more than forty known poets and a dozen unknown and translated them into English prose.

In choosing prose for the medium of his translation Mr. Reid has probably made a wise decision. English elegiacs are seldom satisfying to the ear, and the alternative of using English forms of rhymed verse may well distort the effect of the original. Prose of course robs the poems of their melody, but it keeps their simplicity, and the elegiac is almost always remarkably simple and direct. In its short space it has no room for elaboration. It concentrates on a single moment or a single experience, and what most matters is the unalloyed purity of its effect. Within these limits it covers a wide range of subject. Originally used for inscriptions on tombs or in temples or for songs sung over the wine, it came at the end of the fourth century B.C. to do very much what modern lyric poetry does, to give the poetry of any passing moment in which the poet finds beauty or excitement. Far more than any other Greek poetry it gives the charm of ordinary life, especially in the country. It shows what the Greeks really felt about their gods, their loves, their animals, their children. In Mr. Reid's clean and scholarly prose this life takes on a new freshness and charm.

Mr. Reid has made a good selection. His taste is less for the austere pieces of the archaic period than for the more coloured work of the Hellenistic and Greco-Roman ages. Some would have liked more of Simonides at one end and others will miss Palladas at the other. But such a book is bound to be a reflection of personal taste, and Mr. Reid seems to prefer scenes of Greek life to metaphysical speculations and cries of doubt or anguish. The simplicity of his English certainly suits the themes that he chooses. No prose translation could be better than this from Anyte:

> I, Hermes, stand here at the cross-roads, by the wind-swept orchard near the grey beach, offering rest to tired men.
>
> And the cold pure water gushes out,

or this from Leonidas of Tarentum.

> These toys of his boyhood—his lucky ball, his noisy boxwood rattle, the knucklebones he loved, the top he span—Philokles hangs up here as gifts to Hermes.

This poetry requires no preparation and no instruction for its enjoyment. It is always delightfully human, and it is a pleasure to see it presented in so charming a form, on such good paper, and at so low a price. C. M. BOWRA

THE PROBLEM OF GERMANY

Our Settlement with Germany. By H. N. BRAILSFORD. *Penguin Special*. 9*d*.

Mr. Brailsford's book will annoy many people; even those who agree with its basic assumptions will find themselves occasionally irritated. The first essential, however, if we wish to judge this book fairly, is to understand the assumptions. Mr. Brailsford takes it for granted that having defeated the German war machine we should eliminate from all positions of power and influence the dangerous elements we failed to oust in 1918—the Junkers, the big industrialists, the Nazi party, the S.A., S.S. and Gestapo; our object should then be to re-create good relations as soon as maybe with Germany and so to rebuild Europe that Germans may play a co-operative part in our future civilisation. With this premise I am in agreement and so, I believe, must everyone be whose judgment has not been warped by the war. In a chapter which his bitterest critics will admit to be a masterly summary of a complex period of history, Mr. Brailsford explains how the struggling democracy of Germany was doped and strangled by the Nazi party. He reminds us of a fact which few to-day emphasise—that the number of Germans who did resist was large. That some two millions have suffered, and many of them died in concentration camps is only the first piece of evidence. He holds with good reason that, though a revolution in Germany before the Wehrmacht is destroyed is now unlikely, there are and will be, at the disposal of the Allies, if they will make use of them, many Germans still worthy of exercising authority over their disarmed, dishonoured and shattered nation. This is in fact common ground amongst thoughtful people; sooner or later Germans must govern Germany. Differences arise, however, about which Germans shall be allowed to exercise authority under Allied supervision and about the conditions to be imposed on the country. Mr. Brailsford is anxious that the occupation should not be prolonged and that the terms imposed should not involve loss of territory and other penal measures that will make it impossible for self-respecting Germans to undertake the job of administration.

In his careful and instructive consideration of proposals for integrating Europe and making possible a future German participation, Mr. Brailsford makes, I think, the errors natural to a humane liberal who cannot emotionally, though he does intellectually, face the facts of Europe to-day. Here and there he makes use of phrases which betray a quite unrealistic estimate of the possibilities. He urges, rightly, that we should try to apply such social science as we have to the problem of Germany. He has much to say about the psychology of the Germans, whom he justifiably regards as a sick and neurotic nation. With that in mind he discusses the future in terms of how we are to restore Germany to health. I am not sure in all cases that the cure he suggests is the right one. I doubt, for instance, whether Germans will wish to remain in East Prussia surrounded by Poles and Russians,

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Labour Party Executive
WORK AND WEALTH
Chairman: T. Williamson
Wednesday, March 29, at 6.45 p.m.
EMIL DAVIES, J.P., L.C.C.
Former Chairman of L.C.C.
WORK AND TRADE
Chairman: S. Barou
No Meeting on April 5
Wednesday, April 12, at 6.45 p.m.
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Labour Party Executive
WHO IS TO CONTROL INDUSTRY?
Chairman: Ian Mikardo
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ACT LIKE MAGIC

even if Mr. Brailsford could persuade the victors not to eject them. I fancy he greatly underestimates the fanaticism and tenacity of the Nazis and the will of German militarists to pluck a way of victory out of defeat. On this point he can answer that he proposes the essential—that the heavy industry of the Ruhr and Rhine, without which Germany can never again be dangerous, shall be taken over and run by an International Consortium, and that it shall be used to supply the limitless needs of a devastated Europe. But in discussing other proposals designed to prevent Germany from again becoming powerful, Mr. Brailsford seems to forget that Germany is not the only sick nation whose psychology has to be considered. I am far from wishing to countenance vengeance; that is an obvious way of ensuring that the victors again suffer from a psychological and material rebound similar to that which followed the last punitive period. But it is unrealistic to deal with the dynamic and bitter situation created by Nazi occupation without taking into account the psychological effects of Nazi occupation on Russians, Poles, Czechs and other outraged peoples. It is one of the factors that the social scientist must consider. To omit it, as Mr. Brailsford seems often to do, is indeed to produce *Hamlet* not only without the Prince of Denmark, but also without the Queen, Polonius and Ophelia.

Mr. Brailsford's book is the courageous and sincere attempt of a liberal rationalist to find a reasonable solution of a series of world problems that seem to me not to be in a condition in which rational solution is possible. Here, if men can stop and think, is much wisdom, about "re-education," about reparations (though I cannot see why Mr. Brailsford so much objects to the Russian proposal to conscript the S.S. and Gestapo for reconstruction work in Russia), about the problem of power and, above all, about the economic unity which Europe must attain or perish. Here I think Mr. Brailsford does not make full use of his opportunity; he is so bent on the problem of German recovery that he fails to appreciate how far any hope of salvaging Europe depends on persuading the other nations of Europe to create international institutions. If we can persuade the smaller nations—which will have their own notions of change and their own revolutionary and anti-German point of view—to work together and Russia to co-operate with the Western Powers in the initial stages of rebuilding the essential services of Europe, we shall have taken the first step on which all depends. That will be difficult enough. Mr. Brailsford has useful things to say about these economic essentials. But the emphasis is wrong. If the settlement which Mr. Brailsford suggests for Germany were carried out against the will of Germany's neighbours, none of it would last as long as Versailles. If the Allies can be persuaded to a joint reconstruction of Europe as a whole, Germans in time can share in the advantages. But Germany's neighbours will not allow Germany to outstrip them in the progress of reconstruction or again to win the position of dominance which she abused.

TOM PAINE

GRAMOPHONE NOTES

BAX: *Third Symphony*. Hallé Orch., cond. Barbirolli (H.M.V. C3380–5).

RIMSKY-KORSAKOFF: *Overture—Ivan the Terrible*. Liverpool Philharmonic Orch., cond. Lambert (Col. DX1140).

HANDEL: *Concerti Grossi in G minor, op. 3, No. 10*. Leon Goossens (oboe) with Liverpool Philharmonic, cond. Cameron (Col. DX1144).

GRIEG: *Lyric Suite* (*Op. 54*). Liverpool Philharmonic, cond. Cameron (Col. DX1142–3).

WEBER: *Overture—Der Freischütz*. Boston Promenade Orch. (H.M.V. C3375).

PROKOFIEFF: *Loves of the Three Oranges Suite*. N.B.C. Symph. Orch., cond. Stokowski (H.M.V. DB6151).

PURCELL: "Celia has a Thousand Charms"; "Sweet, we no longer Sail"; "Ah, how Pleasant." Astra Desmond (Decca M550).

PURCELL: "Hark! the Echoing Air"; "I Attempt from Love's Sickness to Fly"; "Nymphs and Shepherds." Astra Desmond (Decca M549).

MOZART: "Grant O Love" (*Figaro*), and "Ah! 'tis gone" (*Magic Flute*). Joan Hammond with Hallé Orch. (Col. DX1141).

BACH-LISZT: *Organ Prelude and Fugue in A minor*. Solomon (H.M.V. C3376).

FAURE: *Theme and Variations* (*Op. 73*). Kathleen Long (Decca M547–8).

It was high time at least one of Sir Arnold Bax's symphonies was recorded. We should like more than one, but the Third is probably the best to begin with, because it is slightly more accessible than the others. Even those who dislike his music would hardly suggest that Bax did not know how to make a beautiful sound with the orchestra. Nevertheless, his symphonies take some getting used to, because the process of thought is obscure and the formal structure (I think it must be admitted) far from satisfactory. In the first movement of this symphony, for instance, the second (slow) section is so diffuse and protracted that the basically allegro character of the movement is quite lost sight of—a fault which recalls the less controlled movements of Mahler. Yet how rich, imaginative, and picturesque the whole thing is! This symphony (like the others) is like a large tapestry, woven in sombre colours. Seated near one corner of it, our eyes are caught and held by a curiously dramatic passage of yellow, brown and red. Half dreaming, we speculate on the colours, the texture, the strange cloudy shapes . . . Later we rise to our feet, view the tapestry as a whole, and discover that we have been gazing at an arrow piercing the throat of a hind, at the dripping blood and at the red mouth of a leaping hound.

I do not belong to the school which prefers Bax's tone poems and chamber music to his symphonies. I understand this point of view, but think it mistaken. His type of mind needs space in which to deploy its pageant, and colour resources that only a modern orchestra can afford; and I believe too that, where a "programme" is concerned, it is the better for remaining implicit. These symphonies explore landscapes without human figures; and it is precisely because this kind of romantic landscape is so peculiarly British that I differ from some critics who have pronounced it unsuitable for export. The British Council, who sponsored this admirable recording, does not exist to carry coals to Newcastle. And now, please, after not too long an interval, let us have Bax's Fifth Symphony, which opens with what I take to be the composer's finest and most consistent piece of symphonic writing.

There are two first-class overtures on my list, the one almost too well known, the other insufficiently so. *Ivan the Terrible* (or *The Maid of Pskov*) was Rimsky-Korsakoff's first opera, and the voice line shows the chastening influence of Dargomijsky; but the overture is a brilliantly dramatic piece with an opening that reveals the born composer of operas. This performance is remarkably vivid and the recording is good. Of the *Freischütz* disc it is only necessary to say that here fine instrumental playing is spoilt by a coarse recording.

The Boyd Neel set of Handel's *Concerti Grossi* would seem to make a further recording for the present otiose; yet an opportunity of hearing Mr. Goossens's oboe is never to be missed. It is less obvious why we should be grateful for Grieg at this particular moment; but listen to the Lyric Suite without prejudice and I think you will agree with me that the elegance, the grace, and the bright, distinct prettiness of these small pieces—like flowers in a paper-weight—have an enduring charm. Now that the drawing-room has become historical, the appurtenances of that setting will gradually acquire

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CHARTERED BANK OF INDIA AUSTRALIA AND CHINA.

MR. V. A. GRANTHAM'S STATEMENT

THE ninetieth ordinary general meeting of the Chartered Bank of India Australia and China will be held in London on 15th March.

The following is an extract from the statement by Mr. V. A. Grantham (chairman) circulated to the shareholders, with the report and accounts:—

In view of the disabilities under which we are suffering, I think the Profit of £314,239 16s. 11d. will be considered satisfactory. We propose that a final dividend for the half-year to 31st December last at 5 per cent. per annum should be paid.

The past year has been a favourable one in the economic development of India, where the Bank's operations abroad are mainly centred at present. Industrial expansion has proceeded apace under the stimulus of the War effort and as a result of restrictions upon the free movement of cargoes from the United Kingdom and other former sources of supply, while on the other hand there has been a continuous and urgent overseas demand for most of India's raw products and manufactures. Under these conditions India has prospered greatly, but this prosperity has not been free from monetary inflation and a heavy rise in prices, so that the incidence of prosperity upon the population has been unequal and has marched hand in hand with real distress. In the absence of a more extensive loan programme or heavier taxation, some relief might have been obtained if it had been possible to increase agricultural production, but, in fact, local crop failures coupled with transport difficulties brought famine to certain areas. The food situation is now happily much improved.

A feature of the rising tide of prosperity in India has been the founding of a considerable number of indigenous Banks.

Turning to China, last year we sent representatives to Chungking to open a Branch of the Bank, and although, owing to the lack of any means of transport between China and the outside World, except by air, there is practically no trade to finance at present, the opening of this Branch has greatly assisted us in considering the problems which face us in our post-war future in China, and in maintaining our relations with our Chinese friends and with those who, like us, have established offices in Chungking in anticipation of a resumption of active trading with China.

The question of the reconstruction of our Branches at present in enemy occupation engages our constant consideration and plans are steadily being worked out against the day when it will be possible to return to them. In the greater field of effort covering the reconstruction of British Trade, dependent as we are upon imports for our very livelihood it has been held that no task is more important than the re-establishment of the export trade of this country. The Agencies and Branches of this Bank, stretching as they did from Bombay and Karachi eastward across the World to New York, were indispensable links in that trade, and it is my earnest hope that the time is not far distant when they will again fulfil the function for which they were originally opened.

a romantic light. Distinction of utterance was among those appurtenances, and Grieg possessed it to a high degree. So did Gabriel Fauré, whose music only leaves the drawing-room to ascend to heaven. The *Theme and Variations* belong to the earth, but they are as characteristic of Fauré as the *Lyric Suite* is of Grieg. Miss Kathleen Long earns our gratitude for a gracious performance of a work which deserves to be better known.

Prokofieff has something of greatness, though it is still too early to guess what his *oeuvre* will look like one hundred years hence. As a composer he is uneven, capricious, and sometimes irritatingly cynical. The *Loves of the Three Oranges* is an opera belonging to the nineteen-twenties and is marred by some of the vices of that imaginative and recklessly experimental period. It is probably not worth reviving in its entirety, but the suite extracted from it is both amusing and beautiful.

I have not much to say about the vocal records on my list. Those who know and appreciate Miss Desmond's singing of Purcell need only be told that her latest renderings have all the qualities of earlier ones; and the same is true of Miss Hammond's Mozart, though I would enter a caveat against the undue resonance of the recording.

I have left the Bach disc to the end of these notes because it is in every way so outstanding. The Liszt transcriptions of Bach's Organ Preludes and Fugues are about as well done as such things can be; they preserve most skilfully the sonorous variety of the originals, sacrifice no essential notes, and are not impossibly difficult to play. But in the hands of a tasteless pianist they can very easily be made to sound like an all-in wrestling match: each entry is stamped remorselessly in, and the incidental detail disappears altogether in an ever-thickening fog of noise. This is the method of the performer who is always looking for an effective exit. Mr. Solomon, on the other hand, gives us a model of true contrapuntal playing. Each finger seems to become a different instrument, so carefully and distinctly are the voices interwoven. The entries are only emphasised in case of dramatic necessity, and careful listening reveals any number of subsidiary passages of fascinating beauty which are never heard at all in an ordinary rendering. There is nothing machine-like about Mr. Solomon's fugal playing: the rhythm is as subtly varied as the colour, and the dynamic scheme is most discreet, keeping the whole fugue well within the focus of *mezzo-piano* and only rising to a double *forte* at the final climax. Many famous pianists, as well as students, could study this remarkable record with real profit: it sets a new standard in the playing of Bach.

Finally a request. Will the Gramophone Company not invite Mr. Albert Sammons to record the Delius Violin Concerto? If one ignores the rather silly final allegro, this wonderful piece of sustained ecstasy, which recalls a sonnet by Dante Gabriel Rossetti, is surely Delius's finest and most characteristic orchestral work. That, at least, was my impression when I heard Mr. Sammons's magnificent and glowing performance on the air, some weeks ago. The concerto has never been recorded nor has the public been given any other chance of getting to know the work at all well.

EDWARD SACKVILLE WEST

Week-end Competitions

No. 755

Set by Roger Marvell

Last Wednesday was the 500th anniversary of the birth of Botticelli. Competitors are invited to write twenty lines from an imaginary poem by Browning about Botticelli, a companion-piece to his Andrea del Santo and Fra Lippo Lippi. Entries must be received not later than March 13th.

RESULT OF COMPETITION No. 732

Set by Fred Oyster

Competitors are asked to write a ballade of the Stars, with a different meaning for the word "stars" in each verse, and the refrain

I gaze in wonder at the stars.

Report by Fred Oyster

Setters should, perhaps, be made to go in for their own competitions: certainly I should have found the present competition a hard task. To write a good ballade is difficult enough in itself, and the other restrictions made it ten times more difficult. I am full of admiration for the skill and industry of competitors. Jack Lodge, Brenda Poole, Philistine, Mrs. Lena Ramsden, William Bliss, Marjorie Redman, and Allan M. Laing all reached an honourable if not very exciting level. I think the best are Reginald Reynolds and Guy Innes, who receive each a prize of a guinea.

BALLADE OF THE STARS.

Lars Porsena, as I've been told,
Had but nine Gods to venerate,
Quite insufficient to uphold
The glories of his blood and state;
But now all that is out of date,
For Venus multiplies with Mars—
Pregnant our Zodiac with fate,
I gaze in wonder at the stars.

No age of iron or of gold
Equals the Age of Chromium Plate
When thrills of passion can be sold
(Including tax) for one and eight.
Reading the habits of the Great
In breezy boosts and chatty pars
And how they Californicate,
I gaze in wonder at the stars.

Once more, as in the days of old,
From *tohu-bohu* they create
A studio Eden, where they mould
Man in their image—and his mate.
But where's the angel at the gate,
The flaming sword, the sin that scars?
Fearing the Stripes may come too late
I gaze in wonder at the Stars.

* * *

Prince Porsena, I speculate
In asterisks; Illustrious Lars,
Let these our crimes commemorate—
I gaze in wonder at the stars.

REGINALD REYNOLDS

STAR-CROSSED

Out of the night that covers me—
I thank thee, Henley, for the hint—
This verse must shine right brilliantly,
This pen of steel strike fire from flint
(The task transcends the Septuagint):
An Envoi and three well-rhymed pars.
Are in what planetary mint? . . .
I gaze in wonder at the stars.

Where is my rhyming diction'ry?
Perchance I may succeed, by dint
Of midnight oil and industry,
And just one surreptitious squint
At Austin Dobson for a glint
Of inspiration * * * * Venus? Mars?
Those asterisks aren't fit to print!
I gaze in wonder at the stars.

My rivals? What a galaxy!
I can but hobble where they sprint—
Laing, Philby, Casson, F.C.C.—
They wear talaria: I, a splint:
I daub: they work in aquatint:
They turn the trope I can but parse:
They twinkle so—the devil's in't!—
I gaze in wonder at the stars.

Envoi

HERBERT, M.P., you didn't stint,
Last of celestial registrars,
To splash the heavens with *your* imprint:
I gaze in wonder at the stars.

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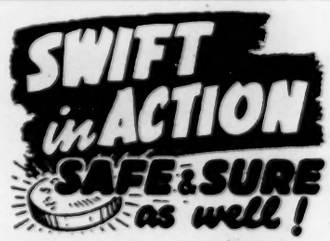

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